

No date for Iraq arms control plan

BAGHDAD (R) — A senior U.N. official said Tuesday he had no date in mind for the completion of a strict monitoring programme of Iraq's arms industry and disarmament activities. Charles Duelfer, deputy chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), said it would be a long time before Iraq's full compliance with U.N. weapons demands. "I would be reckless to predict when that programme could in fact be completed," Mr. Duelfer, an American, told Reuters. Earlier UNSCOM Chairman Rolf Ekens estimated it would take until the end of 1994 before he could be satisfied with U.N. plans to disarm Iraq.



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Rabin in Strasbourg

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin left for Strasbourg on Tuesday to address the Council of Europe on the Middle East peace process, officials said here. Mr. Rabin, accompanied by his diplomatic adviser Jacques Nadeau, was due to return to Israel late Wednesday, the sources said.

Hizbollah leader vows attacks

BEIRUT (AP) — A Hizbollah leader vowed to keep fighting Israel even if a peace treaty is signed and threatened renewed attacks against American targets. A newspaper reported Tuesday, Sheikh Sobhi Tufaili, who headed the Iranian-backed Hizbollah from 1989 to 1991 and currently leads the movement's most radical faction, told the independent Al Hayat daily his goal was to recover all Arab lands lost to Israel and not only a strip it occupies in South Lebanon. "We should continue resisting our (Israeli) enemy despite the objection of the Lebanese government, even if the whole world went along with the peace process," he was quoted as saying.

Iran says Swiss have lax security

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran accused Switzerland Tuesday of lax security at Iranian diplomatic missions on its soil following a stone-throwing attack on the Iranian embassy in Bern, Iranian media reported. Swiss Ambassador Rudolf Weismüller was summoned to the Iranian Foreign Ministry to hear a protest over the Monday attack, Tehran Radio said. Iran's state-run Islamic Republic News Agency said Mr. Weismüller "explored the incident and promised an investigation." Swiss police detained two Iranians Monday in connection with the incident, which shattered four embassy windows. No injuries were reported. The men were released later in the day after they confessed to throwing the rocks. Police refused to identify them.

'Psychic' believes he stopped Big Ben

TEL AVIV (AP) — A self-proclaimed Israeli psychic claims he accidentally silenced the chimes of Big Ben in Britain earlier this week. Uri Geller, an Israeli who claims to bend spoons, stop clocks and read minds, told journalists that he jokingly said Sunday evening that he would like to stop the clock that sits atop the Houses of Parliament in London. "I woke up the next morning and was amazed to hear that indeed it stopped at 6:20 p.m.," Mr. Geller said. "The miraculous act coincided with the filming of a scene in a British director Ken Russell. The scene involved the actor playing Geller standing in front of a large clock whose hands were spinning out of control. A spokeswoman at the Palace of Westminster said Sunday that the clock stopped at 6:20 p.m. (1820 GMT) and was started again by clockmakers at 9:30 p.m. (2130 GMT). Officials said then that they did not know what caused the clock to stop.

Klestil separates from his wife

VIENNA (AFP) — Austrian President Thomas Klestil, whose affair with a close aide set off a major political and media debate here, announced Tuesday that he was permanently separating from his wife. "President Thomas Klestil, 61, attempted during a meeting with his wife and (three) children to clarify the situation, but to his great disappointment, he reached the conclusion that he should permanently separate from his wife and carry out his official obligations alone," an official communiqué said. It added that Mr. Klestil's alleged lover, Margot Loeffler, 39, had requested a transfer overseas as soon as possible. The communiqué said Mr. Klestil was sorry about Ms. Loeffler's decision and hopes she would continue at her post until a replacement can be found.

Jordan wants quick moves, but not at expense of comprehensive peace

King addresses U.S. Jewish leaders in Washington

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein said he wants to "move and move rapidly" towards peace with Israel, but without abandoning the commitment to a settlement that involves the other Arab parties to the negotiations.

In a meeting in the United States with American Jewish leaders on Monday, King Hussein said that Jordan is "moving on our own to deal with all the problems we have to deal with."

The leaders of Arab and Israeli negotiating teams, meanwhile, met Tuesday at undisclosed locations, part of a new format designed to create a more relaxed atmosphere outside the glare of publicity (see story below).

Israeli negotiators met separately with their counterparts from Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestine Organization (PLO).

When Israeli negotiator Elyakim Rubinstein arrived in Washington on Monday he brought along experts on wa-

ter, energy, business and the environment. Mr. Rubinstein was meeting with Jordanian Ambassador Fayez Tarawneh. Israeli Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich and Syrian negotiator Muwaffaq Al Allaf, who met for 90 minutes on Monday, resumed their discussions. The Israeli said their first session was "a good meeting in a positive atmosphere."

Saying that he hoped to see similar determination in the other negotiating tracks, King Hussein added that his commitment to a comprehensive peace in the region "does not mean that we should wait until everybody else deals with their problems."

"We are not tying ourselves down to anything except the determination to move and move rapidly," he said.

A Jordanian government official said the King's statement did not represent any backing away from the Kingdom's commitment not to move ahead with a peace treaty ahead of the Palestinians, Lebanon and Syria.

"We are determined to do what we can," said King Hussein. "But we believe that in the interest of old and future generations in the region, in the interest of the security of all the coming generations, we have to work for comprehensive peace."

Participants in the meeting with King Hussein included the American Jewish Committee, B'nai B'rith, the National Council of Jewish Women, the Jewish Theological Seminary and the American Jewish Congress.

Asked about the Arab boycott of Israel, King Hussein said that the aspect of the boycott in which Arab countries refuse to do business with companies that also do business with Israel "is probably on the way toward being removed."

At the same time he called for an end to Israeli restrictions on imports into the West Bank of products from Jordan.

Mr. Rubinstein meanwhile welcomed King Hussein's comment that a peace treaty would

be the "crowning achievement" of the peace process.

"I hope this statement will result in progress at the negotiations," Mr. Rubinstein told Israeli radio from Washington. "Every positive proposal from the King is an encouraging sign for the negotiations," he added.

In an earlier meeting with Arab ambassadors to the U.S., King Hussein stressed the need for solidarity among Arab countries and collective Arab action at a time when the nation was facing "fateful challenges."

He also called on Arab Americans to coordinate their efforts and potentials in order to "play an influential role in the United States and world public opinion."

"We started to address many elements to see what progress we can make," the King said. "As far as a peace treaty is concerned we feel that it comes at the end which is the crowning achievement of resolving

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Self-rule talks resume unexpectedly in Cairo

CAIRO (AP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said an Israeli delegation was arriving in Cairo on Tuesday night to resume talks on implementation of Palestinian self-rule in areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The move was unexpected since Israeli and Palestinian officials said Monday that negotiations would be suspended until after a second meeting expected this weekend between Mr. Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

The early resumption of talks suggested new proposals could be under study to implement the accord signed by the two sides last September calling for Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.

An Israeli withdrawal was due to take place Dec. 13 under the accord. However, differences over control of crossing points and how much land Israel will cede around Jericho have delayed the pullout.

Mr. Arafat, speaking to reporters after a two-hour meeting with Foreign Minister Amr Musa, did not give the names of the Israeli delegates. But he said they had accompanied Mr. Peres in his meeting with the PLO chief in Oslo, Norway, last week.

When and where the Israeli and PLO delegates will meet also was not disclosed. The two sides have sought to avoid reporters during their past talks in Cairo.

In Israel, officials at Ben Gurion airport said a special flight with an Israeli delegation left for Cairo. The delegation was believed to include Yoel Zinger, a legal adviser to the PLO.

Mr. Arafat praised Egypt's effort in solving differences between Israel and the PLO, the latest being a visit by Mr. Musa to Israel on Monday in which he reportedly carried Palestinian suggestions to overcome the deadlock in the talks.

Egypt's Middle East Agency quoted Mr. Arafat as also saying that Mr. Musa brought important results from Israel and that the talks in Cairo could continue until Friday.

Mr. Musa told reporters that he will take part in the meeting between Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat, planned next Saturday in Davos, Switzerland.

He added that during his meeting with Mr. Arafat, the PLO leader had a telephone conversation with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. He did not say whether the two

Nothing less than full Golan pullout — Allaf

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria will settle for nothing less than a total Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, its chief negotiator at Middle East peace talks said Tuesday.

Muwaffaq Al Allaf, quoted by the official news agency SANA, said his country "rejects any proposals that do not provide for its recovery of all of the Golan."

He reaffirmed to his Israeli counterpart Itamar Rabinovich "the principles of the Syrian stand as expressed by President Hafez Al Assad" at his summit on Jan. 16 with U.S. President Bill Clinton.

At the Geneva summit, Mr. Assad said for the first time that he would consider "normal peaceful relations" with Israel, as part of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

In Washington, bilateral peace talks between Israel and its Arab neighbours continued Tuesday, as negotiators met in secret locations in hopes that removing them from the public eye will make room for more progress.

Israeli negotiators met Tuesday with representatives of Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians, according to a source close to the talks.

Discussions resumed Monday after a four-month break following the signing of a peace accord between Israel and the

Palestine Liberation (PLO) in September.

The 11 previous rounds of discussions were held at the State department, with negotiators sometimes issuing daily statements on what had occurred.

This new round of bilateral talks has been limited to delegation heads, sometimes accompanied by experts.

For example, when Israeli delegation head Elyakim Rubinstein met Monday with Jordanian Ambassador Fayez Tarawneh to discuss water, environmental and energy, they were accompanied only by experts on these issues.

In discussions with Syria, which had been expected to be the next breakthrough after the dramatic agreement reached with the Palestinians last year, Mr. Rabinovich told Israeli radio after 90 minutes of talks with Mr. Allaf only that the meeting was held "in a positive and serious atmosphere."

Israeli-Syrian talks have been deadlocked for months with Israel demanding that Damascus detail its ideas for peace before it withdraws its troops from the Golan Heights, and Damascus insisting on a full withdrawal by Israel.

Mr. Rabinovich opened the

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Jordan, Iraq to study pipeline to Aqaba

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and Iraq have agreed to study possibilities of building an oil pipeline to link Iraq with the port of Aqaba after international sanctions on Iraq are lifted, an official statement said Tuesday.

The statement, issued by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid Asfour to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the agreement to conduct a feasibility study for the project was part of an accord Mr. Asfour and his Iraqi counterpart Safa Hadi Jawad signed in Baghdad earlier this week.

The statement did not give details of the project except that the agreement also included building a refinery at Aqaba based on studies on Jordan's consumption beyond the year 2010. In the meantime, Iraqi-supplied oil in excess of Jordanian consumption would be exported.

Petra quoted Dr. Asfour as saying that the project aimed at securing Iraqi oil supplies in a "quicker and safer manner once the sanctions are lifted."

The findings of the feasibility study will be submitted to the government of the two countries for approval, he said.

During his visit to Baghdad, Dr. Asfour also held talks with other senior Iraqi officials and attended a meeting with the energy ministers of Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Turkey on linking the power grids of the five countries in a regional network.

The agreement signed in Baghdad by Dr. Asfour and Mr. Jawad also renewed an arrangement under which Jordan will buy four million tonnes of crude and fuel oil from Iraq during the year 1994.

This would roughly mean a daily supply of 50,000 barrels of crude oil and 25,000 barrels of fuel oil — Jordan's full needs of imported energy.

According to industry sources, part of the oil will be supplied free of cost and the rest at market prices.

The Iraqi oil supply to Jordan is exempt from the sweeping international sanc-

tions imposed against Iraq following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Dr. Asfour also discussed with the Iraqi officials possibilities of exchange of expertise in oil and mineral exploration in cooperation with Jordan's natural resources authority and conducting studies on the Al Risheh gas fields near the Jordanian-Iraqi border.

The Aqaba pipeline project appears to be a dusted-off version of a plan Jordan and Iraq abandoned in the mid-80s after Israel refused to provide an international undertaking not to attack the installation.

The Israeli refusal, which was demanded by both Jordan and Iraq, prompted the U.S. Eximbank to refuse a \$550 million loan for the project, which at that time was estimated to cost \$1 billion.

The project was considered at the height of Iraqi oil exports through Aqaba when part of the Iraqi oil exporting facilities were crippled during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. It envisaged laying a 1,000-kilometre long pipeline of 75-

centimetre diameter from the H-3 pumping station in Iraqi territory near the border and down south through the desert to Aqaba.

The H-3 station was part of a pre-1948 pipeline that pumped Iraqi oil across Jordan to the Mediterranean port of Haifa in British Palestine.

According to industry sources, the Iraqi part of the pipeline remains largely intact. Parts of the line in Jordanian territory near Mafraq have been destroyed.

Another project under consideration in the late 80s was tapping an Iraqi pipeline with the Saudi oil port of Yanbu at Jordan and building a link with Aqaba. This project envisaged the linkage in Saudi territory near the border with Jordan in the south and would have substantially reduced the cost when compared with the earlier proposal.

Officials said the project, which at one point appeared to have been all but finalised, was no longer under consideration.

Hrawi, Berri in Syria for talks

BEIRUT (AP) — President Elias Hrawi and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri on Tuesday discussed the Middle East peace process with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad during a snap meeting at Mr. Assad's hometown in northwest Syria. Mr. Assad, who was receiving condolences for the death of the eldest son in his hometown of Kordah, broke from the mourners to hold private talks with the Lebanese leaders. Beirut's state-run radio reported. The three leaders were joined by Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam. The talks lasted for 90 minutes after which Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Berri returned to Beirut, the radio said. The leadership discussed "the situation in the region and the peace talks," the radio said. No further details were given.



Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor Monday meet with a group of U.S. Jewish leaders (Petra wirephoto)

Government committees to probe food, medicine situation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government on Tuesday announced the formation of two ministerial committees to investigate the situation of food and medicine in the country and reaffirmed that the executive authority was committed to taking whatever measures were necessary to rectify the situation.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted Acting Prime Minister Ma'n Abu Nowar as saying at a Cabinet session that ensuring the safety of food and medicine and "preventing manipulation or neglect is a basic concern of the government, which will not tolerate any violations by anyone."

Recent comments by Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas that laws governing the import and distribution of food and medicine were violated have to be seen as part of an ongoing government effort to ensure "the maximum degree of health and guarantee of safety to the public," Dr. Abu Nowar said.

Dr. Abu Nowar, in comments carried by Petra, said the Cabinet had set up two committees: The first, headed by Minister of Supply Radi Ibrahim, will review issued related to food such as proce-

dures of imports, transportation, storing, distribution and pricing.

The second panel, headed by Dr. Malhas, will review the process of importing medicine, transportation, storing, distribution and constant monitoring.

Both committees will present their findings to the full Cabinet.

During Tuesday's session, the Cabinet heard reports from Dr. Malhas and Mr. Ibrahim on the medicine and food situation in the country.

Dr. Abu Nowar said the government was maintaining a close watch over the situation, but that there were some loopholes resulting from overlapping of functions which were being exploited by some groups with vested interest groups.

"The government is keen on safeguarding the health of its people and preventing the imports of food and drugs which are not consistent with national or international specifications," Dr. Abu Nowar said.

"While the government appreciates the keenness of some merchants to safeguard the interests of the country and people and (the work) of a great majority of those work-

ing in the areas of health, food and medicine, it will not keep silent or show leniency towards any shortcomings, deficiency or exploitation or any tampering with the safety of food and medicine," Dr. Abu Nowar warned.

The Lower House of Parliament, prompted by the comments of Dr. Malhas, made in an interview with an Arabic-language weekly, is meeting today to consider a request by 33 deputies to debate the food and medicine situation.

Six political parties on Tuesday issued a statement demanding immediate investigations into "cases of corruption" and "punishment for those who are found guilty of abusing their positions to violate the regulations on food and medicine in Jordan."

The parties called for a public rally to be held in front of the Parliament House today to register the citizens' protest and demand punishment for violators of the food and medicine regulations.

Specifically referring to the comments made by the health minister, the six leftist parties demanded that the prosecutor general undertake an investigation.

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Violations not new, date back to years — sources

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Health in 1989 authorised the sale of at least 70 food items without testing them for safety despite the objection of the then director of the central laboratories department at the ministry, according to informed sources and official documents made available to the Jordan Times.

The sale of the food items, which included milk, meat, coffee and cheese, were authorised by a senior laboratory official in March 1989 after the then undersecretary of the ministry of health put the laboratories director on an administrative leave "in order to facilitate work at the laboratories," the documents reveal.

The minister of health was outside the country at the time and the under-secretary asked the director to resume her duties one day before the minister came back, according to the documents.

A few weeks before the food items were authorised, the director of the food laboratories had sent the minister of health an "urgent" letter informing him that many of the

food samples submitted to the laboratories were not being tested in accordance with health regulations, the documents reveal.

The former director, who was later transferred to the pharmacy and drug control department, told the minister that she would not sign any reports certifying that food items are fit for human consumption unless proper tests had been conducted on them, according to the documents.

In the letter, dated March 13, 1989, the director told the minister that microbial contamination tests were not being conducted on all food samples presented to the laboratories for testing, but reports certifying that they were free from microbes were being issued, according to the documents.

The documents reveal that the director had told the minister all samples submitted for testing were "handled on the same day and this is an illegal and unscientific practice."

In a second letter to the minister dated March 15, 1989, the director of the laboratories cited specific incidents as evidence that the proper tests on food samples were not being conducted, according to the documents.

"(This is an issue) that pertains to the direct health of the citizen, and I will not sign any (authorisation) reports after my investigation proved that tests were not conducted on (the concerned food items)," the director told the minister, according to the documents.

Sources and documents confirm that the then minister of health commissioned a committee to "study the situation" at the laboratories and a number of its staff were subsequently transferred.

According to the documents and sources, the staff members transferred because they were not doing their job properly. New employees were hired by the laboratory after they received training at the Jordan University of Science and Technology, according to the sources and the documents.

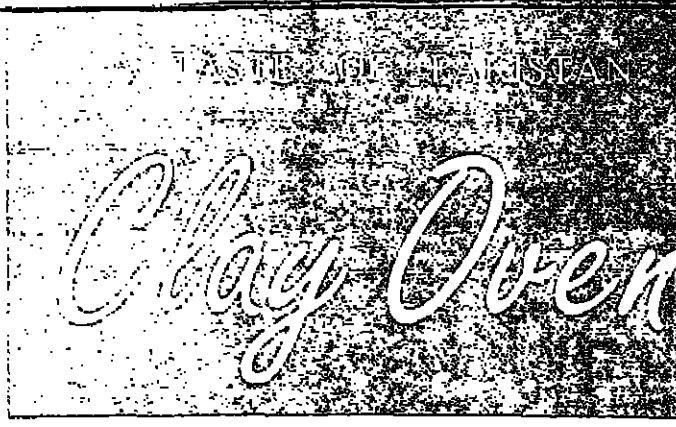
In December 1989, the director of the laboratories sent the minister a letter, in which she gave a thorough assessment of the situation there.

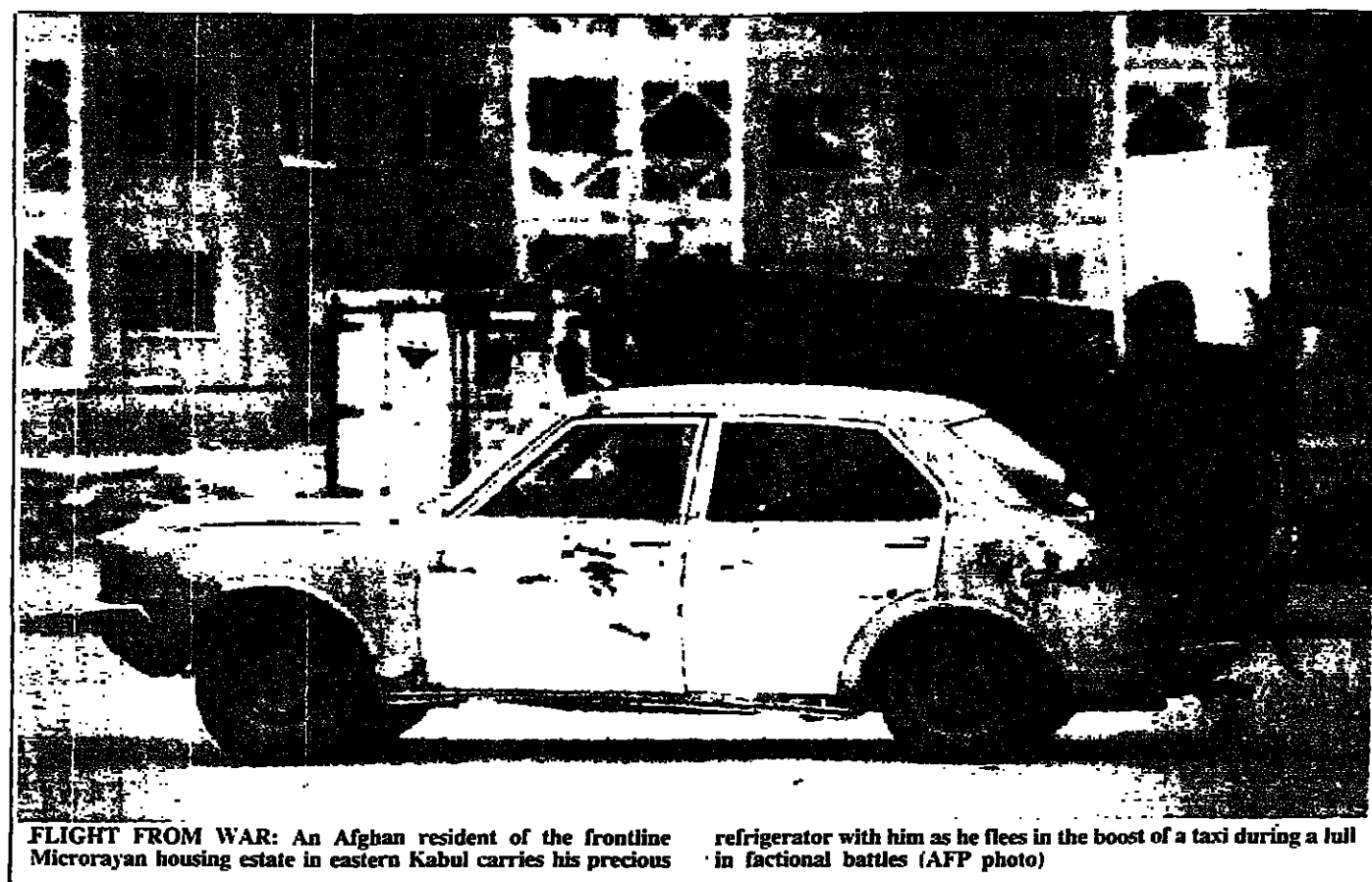
The documents reveal that she told him sanitary conditions at the laboratories did not meet the required standards and the laboratory was not

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De Lapresle to replace Cot

PARIS (R) — France has proposed General Bertrand de Lapresle, commander of its rapid intervention force, to take over as commander of U.N. peacekeeping forces in former Yugoslavia, Defence Minister Francois Leotard said Tuesday. He told television he wanted Mr. de Lapresle to replace French General Jean Cot.





FLIGHT FROM WAR: An Afghan resident of the frontline Microrayan housing estate in eastern Kabul carries his precious

refrigerator with him as he flees in the boost of a taxi during a full

East German agent links Syria to Berlin bombing

BERLIN (AP) — A former East German espionage agent broke his silence Monday on the bombing of a French cultural centre and gave testimony linking Syria and the international gunman "Carlos" to the 1983 attack.

Though East Germany's ties to attacks in western Europe and to global extremist groups have long been documented, Helmut Voigt is the first East German agent to testify on how it was done.

When Mr. Voigt went on trial Jan. 12 on a charge of accessory to murder, he denied that he had handed over the 24 kilograms of explosives that prosecutors say were used in the bombing that killed one man and injured 23 others.

But on Monday he gave a detailed statement to the Berlin district court, admitting that he had arranged to transfer the explosives to Johannes Weirich, a West German accomplice of the Venezuelan Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, known as Carlos.

Prosecutors say the explosives were used in the bombing of the Maison de France cultural centre on fashionable Kurfürstendamm Avenue in West Berlin on Aug. 25, 1983.

Mr. Voigt, 51, said he was not certain the explosives were used in the attack.

Mr. Voigt was at the time head of the section that trained and harboured agents for East Germany's ministry of state security, known as the Stasi.

He was arrested in 1992 in Greece, where he was living under a false identity, and extradited to Germany last year.

He told the court that Mr. Weirich and others responsible for the Maison de France bombing were under cover now in Syria, and that German authorities had not made serious efforts to bring them to Germany for trial.

Mr. Voigt said Hungary's secret service tipped East Germany that Mr. Weirich was travelling to East Berlin, bearing a Syrian diplomatic passport and carrying explosives in Syrian diplomatic baggage.

East German police confiscated the explosives when Mr. Weirich arrived on March 31, 1983, but did not arrest him because they were uncertain how Syria would react and because they feared retribution from Carlos' Group, Mr. Voigt said.

He said the explosives were returned to Mr. Weirich only after several meetings during which he promised to store them in the Syrian embassy in East Berlin and not to use them against a third country in East Germany. Mr. Voigt said a superior had told him to give Mr. Weirich the explosives.

Though Carlos is believed to have carried out other bombings against France in 1983 to force the French to release jailed comrades, Mr. Weirich told the East Germans Carlos had no plans against France and intended to concentrate on the Palestine conflict, Mr. Voigt testified.

He said Syria gave thorough support to the Carlos group, and Mr. Weirich received a new Syrian diplomatic passport as well as false West German papers.

Mr. Voigt's trial is expected to last until March. He could receive 15 years imprisonment if convicted for accessory to murder. Prosecutors say the man who placed the bomb at the French cultural centre is dead, a victim of civil war in Lebanon.

Mr. Voigt led the Stasi's "terrorism" section from 1980 until 1989, when East Germany collapsed. Prosecutors say his operation supplied and trained "terrorists" active in the West, from the German leftist Red Army faction to the Japanese Red Army and Middle Eastern groups. German courts have sent to prison numerous Red Army Faction members whose false identities in east Germany were uncovered after the communist regime ended.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rabin meets noisy opposition in youth rally

TEL AVIV (AFP) — A right-wing demonstrator threw a coal at Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and accused the premier — who was unharmed — of being a "traitor" during a noisy demonstration here late Monday, police said. The young man was held for questioning after the incident during a meeting organised by the religious youth movement Hachshara in Jerusalem. Dozens of young demonstrators had harassed Mr. Rabin from the moment he arrived for the meeting shouting "traitor" and "we shall never move from the Golan Heights." Despite the intervention of Mayor Ehud Olmert (Heights), the Israeli premier was then interrupted several times during his speech from the opposition Likud group, who appealed in his speech for calm, police said. There have been frequent right-wing demonstrations against Rabin since he took the hand of Yasser Arafat in Washington on Sept. 13 after the signing of an accord on limited Palestinian self-rule in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho. The demonstrations have also denounced recent moves by the Israeli government accepting the principle of making territorial concessions in the Golan Heights to the Syrians.

Rebels kidnap mayor in southeast Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Rebel Kurds killed three people and kidnapped seven, including a local mayor, when they ambushed two minibuses in Turkey's troubled southeast on Monday, Anatolia news agency reported. Turkish government troops killed two Kurdish militants in separate clashes in the region, the agency added. Militants of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) abducted Karakoyunlu Mayor Ramazan Hoshaber, his driver and five unidentified people at a roadblock 10 kilometres from the town centre in Igdir province, Anatolia said. Earlier a guard and two women were killed and seven passengers were injured when PKK guerrillas raked the minibuses with rifle fire at another roadblock. One of the guerrillas was shot dead by armed guards on the bus, the agency added. The agency said security forces killed one more PKK militant in a clash in diyarbakir province. Over 10,000 people have died since the separatist PKK began its fight for an independent state in 1984.

N. Korea, Iran sign visa waiver for diplomats

TOKYO (AFP) — North Korea and Iran have agreed to waive visa requirements for diplomats visiting each other's country, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said Tuesday. The agreement was signed in Pyongyang Monday in a ceremony attended by North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kyu-Il and his Iranian counterpart, Manoushehr Mottaki, according to the official news agency monitored here. Iran maintains diplomatic ties with the two Koreas but in recent years has expanded military cooperation with the hardline state in the north. According to U.S. intelligence reports, Pyongyang has supplied Scud-type rockets to Tehran. Iran and North Korea signed a protocol on military cooperation in November 1990.

Ghali recommends extending UNIFIL mandate

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) should stay another six months at the request of the Lebanese government, the U.N. secretary general said in a report released Monday. The troops' mandate should be extended until July 31, Secretary General Boutros Ghali said. The U.N. Security Council is to consider the issue this week, Western diplomats said. U.N. troops have been stationed in Lebanon since 1978. There are currently some 5,200 members in the force, which was due to leave at the end of the month. Dr. Ghali said he hoped the force could be reduced by July, providing there is progress in the Middle East peace process.

Ship caught with rocket fuel for Iraq

BONN (R) — A chemical used in missile fuel has been intercepted on its way to Iraq in defiance of United Nations sanctions, the German government said. Intelligence tip-offs led German and Saudi inspectors to the consignment on board the German-registered freighter "Asian Senator", docked in Jeddah on its way from Hong Kong to Beirut, a government spokesman Dieter Vogel told reporters. "We have been told by experts that chemical was destined for Iraq via Beirut," he said. "There were clear indications that the substance was appropriate for and destined to be used for such purposes (as rocket fuel) in Iraq." The chemical, ammonium perchlorate, was in over 100 barrels and came from the Chinese port of Hong Kong, although it was not known where it was manufactured. Accompanying documents listed it as a different, harmless substance. It was confiscated after the search on Dec. 28. Mr. Vogel said there were no plans to take legal action against the shipper since the government believed it was a reputable firm and had been duped. He said China had also denied any knowledge of the shipment but had agreed to take the consignment back. Iraq has been subject to U.N. economic sanctions since invading Kuwait in August 1990. Their removal is tied to a number of conditions including the recognition of Kuwait and agreement to U.N. monitoring to ensure Iraq has renounced weapons of mass destruction.

Police round up alleged PKK collectors

MARSEILLE (AFP) — Ten alleged supporters of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) were arrested here on Tuesday on suspicion of exporting funds for the separatist organisation, which is banned in Turkey. Police, including officers from an anti-terrorist unit, carried out the sweep following the arrest of the presumed head of the network on Monday. Police, who searched the homes of the ten, said the PKK contributors were "not always voluntary, violence was often used to get the money."

Peace now or hardline will rise — Glickman

WASHINGTON (AP) — The time for peace in the Middle East is now — otherwise extremist groups will continue to gain influence, Representative Dan Glickman said Monday after a visit to the region.

He is chairman of the Intelligence Committee in the House of Representatives.

"If it's not done now, in five to 15 years radical Muslim fundamentalists will dominate the Arab World," said Mr. Glickman in an interview. "You will be in a perpetual state of terrorism."

Mr. Glickman said he is generally satisfied with U.S. intelligence efforts in the Middle East, with the notable exception of the extremist groups.

Our biggest flaw is that our human intelligence hasn't been able to crack some of the more radical elements," he said. "It's hard to get people into those groups. You have to be in 20 years before they trust you."

Talks on Middle East peace resumed Monday.

Although discussions between Israel and Syria have stalled, Mr. Glickman said his weeklong visit to Israel, Syria, Jordan and Egypt convinced him that all sides are serious about achieving peace.

For one thing, the fall of the Soviet Union has stopped the flow of arms to some Arab countries, leaving the Israeli military much stronger position.

"The communist help to the Arab World is gone," Mr. Glickman said. "The Syrians know they'll never destroy Israel. It's here, it's a reality."

Other Arab countries like Syria also want better relations with the United States, he said, for economic reasons.

Mr. Glickman credited Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak with being the "driving, catalytic force" that will bring all sides together.

"He's done a lot to give the Israelis confidence that their security isn't being threatened," he said.

Of particular concern to U.S. intelligence is the influence of Islamic groups such as Hizbollah, which Mr. Glickman said would try to derail the talks if possible.

"They're going to do everything they can to disrupt the peace process," he said. "This is a move for raw power in that part of the world. They are having some success."

All sides are looking to the United States to help broker the peace, Mr. Glickman added, but there is no talk of U.S. ground troops.

"America is viewed as the only entity in the world that can have any role in securing and guaranteeing this peace," he said. "We obviously have a great stake in securing the peace."

Weizman offers rare praise for Assad

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli President Ezer Weizman says he believes Syrian President Hafez Al Assad has decided to make peace with Israel after decades of war.

But in remarks broadcast by Israel Radio from Ankara on Tuesday, Mr. Weizman urged Mr. Assad to meet Israeli leaders to try to better understand Israeli hopes and expectations.

Israeli-Syrian peace talks resumed in Washington on Monday after a four-month suspension. An Israeli official said they took place in a "good and positive atmosphere."

Mr. Weizman, on the first official visit to Turkey by an Israeli president, spoke at a dinner on Monday hosted by President Suleyman Demirel.

He offered rare public praise for Mr. Assad from a top Israeli and sent the Syrian leader condolences on the death of his son Basel Assad in a car crash on Friday.

"I believe President Assad when he says that he has made a strategic decision for peace. I believe his sincerity and integrity," said Mr. Weizman, a former combat pilot who while in government helped forge Israel's landmark peace treaty with Egypt in 1979.

"He is a man of honour but he has to understand that in peace, like in war, one has to recognise the mentality of one's counterpart," said the 69-year-old president whose present job is largely ceremonial.

Mr. Assad demands the return of all of the Golan Heights seized by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war. Israel is ready to cede some land but won't discuss how much until Syria commits to what Israeli calls "full peace."

In Geneva last week, Mr. Assad said there could be "normal peaceful relations." But Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin faulted him for not specifically embracing diplomatic relations, open borders and trade.

"It seems to me that in Geneva he (Assad) failed to understand the expectations of public opinion in Israel," Mr. Weizman said.

"I do hope that in the near future he will make a bold decision and meet Israelis, meet the prime minister, meet the foreign minister, talk to them, understand them and know the spirit of the country."

Mr. Rabin said Sunday he was ready to negotiate peace with Mr. Assad anywhere on earth and without prior conditions.

"We in our area know the grief and sorrow of burying our children, of burying our sons. I take this opportunity, Mr. President, to send by condolences to President Assad for the loss of his son," Mr. Weizman told Mr. Demirel.

Mr. Rabin said Monday that Israel and Syria had retained

the military option despite resuming peace talks in Washington.

"From a military viewpoint Syria has the option of war, but not from a political viewpoint. In our military deployments Syria remains the number one target," Mr. Rabin told the foreign affairs and defence committee of the Israeli Knesset (parliament), according to Israeli radio.

"I don't think disruption of the peace process will necessarily lead to war with Syria, but on the other hand I cannot say categorically that there won't be a war with Syria."

Mr. Rabin said he had "no doubt" that this year "the future of talks with Syria, and perhaps with other Arab parties will be settled once and for all."

"In present circumstances peace must be given a chance," he added.

An Israeli military intelligence report presented to the cabinet Sunday said Syria had for now given up its military option against Israel, instead focusing on rapprochement with the United States, Israel Television said.

The report said Syria wanted to get out of the "cycle of war" with Israel.

It also said Israel last year achieved strategic superiority over its northeastern neighbour, whose army is equipped mainly with outdated arms from the former Soviet Union.

Israeli Environment Minister Yossi Sarid said earlier he expected Israel to sign peace agreements this year with all its Arab neighbours, adding that his forecast was based on reports from the intelligence services.

On Sunday Mr. Rabin ruled out organising a referendum on the Golan Heights until a peace accord was reached with Syria.

In his Ankara comments, Mr. Weizman said cooperation of Israel and Turkey was vital for the Middle East, and the two countries — together with Egypt — could revitalise the area.

"In peace time, Turkey can be a bridge between Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe."

"The establishment of a true peace in the Middle East, the end of conflicts, normal relations between the countries with open borders, free movement of people and trade, joint investments, Syrian planes ferrying tourists to the Ben Gurion airport, and the (Israeli airline) El Al planes similarly flying to Damascus are no longer distant dreams," the Israeli president said.

Mr. Demirel also hailed the progress recorded so far in the Middle East peace process, which he said was encouraging Turkey to carry its efforts for regional economic cooperation.

Satellite television boom sweeps Tehran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Satellite dishes, long regarded with suspicion in Iran as instruments for spreading undesirable western culture, have mushroomed on rooftops in the Iranian capital.

After a decade of resistance to the reception of Western broadcasts and repeated warnings from the authorities about a "cultural onslaught," the new technology is making inroads on Iranian society.

Possession of satellite dishes, which can receive television broadcasts from Europe, the United States and Asia, is officially forbidden in Iran, which has sought to wipe out all traces of Western culture since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

However, a lucrative underground trade in satellite equipment has been flourishing for two years, as many middle-class Tehranis seek an alternative to the strict, puritanical programmes offered by local television stations.

Taking advantage of the authorities' apparent tolerance, thousands of families here have opted to spend an estimated \$1,000 on a dish and receiver which enable them to "see what goes on in the world," in the words of one technician.

Several private companies have started manufacturing dishes and other simple satellite parts, while the receivers are imported clandestinely from Gulf Arab states and Turkey.

Faced with the growing popularity of satellite equipment, the authorities have been forced to take steps to satisfy the population's entertainment needs, albeit within the framework of Islamic values.

The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance is planning to set up a centre for the

reception and reproduction of "benign" foreign programmes, to address the needs of youngsters and to counter western influences.

Several large dishes have been installed on the roof of a modern four-storey building in Tehran, where a team of specialists vet and select programmes transmitted via satellite.

Some 12 million copies of movies and other broadcasts deemed to be "healthy" are to be put on video and shown to the public through 4,000 video clubs established throughout the country, according to newspapers.

The decision marks a shift away from the hardline tactics previously employed to prevent video distribution, and the adoption of a more educational approach to thwart the allegedly "harmful" effects of foreign productions.

Iran's state television recently added a third channel to

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	N.S.A. sport
18:00	News in French
19:15	Le Journal De L'Histoire
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Too Close for Comfort
21:10	The Ozone Alarm
22:00	News in English
22:30	News in Day One
PRAYER TIMES	
05:09	Fajr
06:29	(Sunset) Dhuhr
11:43	Dhuhr
14:42	Asr
17:06	Maghreb
18:37	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 627785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590, Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terzian Church Tel. 623366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 675236	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684199	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
It will be relatively cold, cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance of scattered rains, and winds becoming westerly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with a chance of rain, and winds will be northerly moderate.	
Buletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
MIN/Max. temp.	
Amman	5/11
Aqaba	11/19
Deserts	4/14
Jordan Valley	10/18
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 18. Humidity readings:	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

AMMAN 80 per cent. Aqaba 48 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Nahaw	819213
Dr. Jamil Marqah	776149
Dr. Makhles Halasa	819201
Dr. Jamal Jarrah	847381
First pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asema pharmacy	637055
Naroukh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shimciani pharmacy	637660
Nairouh pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ali Al Omani	272032
Al Quds pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Youssef Harzallah	988775
Khalifah pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	819208
Blood Bank	775121
Traffic Police	643402
Public Security Department	894390
Hotel Complaints	605841
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Repairs	767111
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	773111
Water Authority	680101
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussien Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn.	642416
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn.	642412
Jabal Amman Maternity	623262
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmiesan	664714
Shmiesan Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845865
Al-Musheir Hospital	667279
The Islamic, Alhali	6612737
Al-Ahli, Abadi	664146
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	7751125
Army, Marmas	8916115
Queen Alia Hospital	6024050
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)90560
Im Sina Hospital	(09)989732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)989790
IRBID:	
Prince Basmal Hospital	(02)75555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)72275
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)520055, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:30	Jeddah (RJ)
09:05	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:15	Larnaca (RJ)
10:35	London (RJ)
11:25	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
12:30	Brussels, Paris (RJ)
13:10	Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
18:10	Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
18:10	Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
20:00	Rome, Istanbul (RJ)
20:00	Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
08:30	Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
09:30	Rome, Istanbul (RJ)
10:15	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:10	Berlin, London (RJ)
12:30	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
13:30	Columbo (RJ)
20:00	Riyadh (RJ)
20:30	New Delhi (RJ)
21:30	Aden (RJ)
21:30	Aqaba, Cairo (RJ)
22:45	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
22:45	Sana'a (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
09:05	Rome (IAZ)
09:35	Cairo (MS)
10:30	Jeddah (SA)
10:30	Sana'a (FY)
12:30	Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
14:35	Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PI)
18:15	Paris, Damascus (AF)
19:45	Doha (ME)
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	729450
Banana	680
Banana (Mukammal)	620
Cabbage	70/40
Carrot	180/120
Cauliflower	90/30
Clementine	200/200
Cucumbers (large)	110/60
Cucumbers (small)	250/180
Eggplant	200/200
Garlic	160/60
Grapefruit	900/600
Green beans	700/550
Lemon	160/100
Marjoram (large)	120/50
Marjoram (small)	230/170
Olives (green)	370/120
Orange	300/300
Onion (dry)	360/300
Onion (green)	200/160
Pepper (large)	240/180
Pepper (small)	240/180
Potato	260/180
Spinach	160/80
Spinach	130/70
String beans	500/400

Cold temperatures expected to continue

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Department of Meteorology Monday said the cold from affecting the Kingdom will continue through Wednesday morning bringing heavy rains to some parts of the country. It is expected to taper off Thursday with moderate weather throughout the day and early Friday, according to department director Ali Abanda.

Friday afternoon and evening will bring colder weather and heavier rains are expected Saturday and Sunday with probable snowfall in the high mountains areas, Dr. Abanda told the Jordan Times Tuesday.

The rains that fell in the southern regions registered above the annual average rainfall, according to the Ministry

of Agriculture. Jamil Jaafreh, director of the Agriculture Department in the southern Jordan Valley said the rains this week benefited vegetable crops particularly tomatoes which are to be exported to other countries.

The rains also helped to eliminate pests such as common flies and those which cause damage to tomatoes and beans, Mr. Jaafreh said.

He called on farmers to spray their crops after temperature rise slightly and the rains stop.

Mr. Jaafreh said the absence of frost this year helped the crops to grow in abundance.

He expected the current agricultural season in the southern Jordan Valley to be one of the best in years.

Consumer protection group supports Malhas Establishment of independent regulating body urged

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Mohammad Obeidat, president of the National Consumer Protection Society (NCPS), came out strongly in support of Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas who last week raised public concern over the quality of food and medicines imported into the Kingdom.

"We cannot overemphasize the positive results and the debate which the minister's comments have produced, especially as he is the first authority for protecting the health and safety of the Jordanian citizen," Mr. Obeidat said at a press conference Tuesday.

"Despite the obvious uproar which the statements

have caused, we strongly urge that this issue should not simply pass by us without benefit to the public."

Mr. Obeidat called for reforming and strengthening existing regulations governing food and medicines in Jordan and additional work to guarantee full availability of medicines to patients at honest prices.

Most importantly, the NCPS called for the establishment of a fully independent and unified food and drug regulation administration to regulate and perform surveillance and control testing on food and medicines available to the public.

"It should be an independent department, fully equipped with its own laboratories and investigative powers, and having its own body of law,

preferably under the direction of the Prime Ministry or Parliament," Mr. Obeidat said.

The Jordanian Panel of Supply Policy, in a general announcement of its own, said "there continues to exist the problem of multiple parties being present which are involved in the overall responsibility for supervision and quality control surveillance of food substances, and the consumer is the person who pays the final price for this lack of unity (of food regulation departments in Jordan) and the interference which is present in the carrying out of their responsibilities."

Mr. Obeidat said the NCPS was calling for "a special panel to be set up, as

soon as possible, to investigate," Dr. Malhas's allegations, "preferably in the coming days." He added that the NCPS was officially requesting to be a member of the proposed panel.

In response to criticisms that the NCPS itself had been lax in bringing such alleged problems to the attention of the public earlier, Mr. Obeidat replied: "We have never, at any time, hidden from the public any information (regarding such issues) that have come to our attention."

Mr. Obeidat and Abdul Fatah Keilani, the NCPS secretary-treasurer, said that what had hampered the society in the past and continued to do so was that it had no real and effective investiga-

tive powers of its own and no laboratories, and in general it had to wait for someone to come forward on their own with a complaint supported by reliable evidence, before conducting any inquiry.

Mr. Obeidat strongly refuted that the NCPS had ever come under any covert or illicit pressure from any party to cancel or conceal a complaint, although "naturally, in the line of performing our duties, we have received harsh words or insults at times."

A member of the NCPS who spoke to the Jordan Times after the press conference, agreed that the NCPS was desperately lacking authority to conduct its own independent investigations.

"We have no independent

sources and eyes of our own to look for us inside the system," the NCPS member, who preferred anonymity, said.

He was pessimistic that any effective changes would occur soon.

"New laws will help to improve the situation, but they are only 10 per cent of the overall problem. Ninety per cent of it is in the inherent system and power structure itself, and that will not be changed easily, whatsoever."

"I expect that any bonafide improvements in the system would take 10 to 15 years or more. The fact is that the people who benefit from corruption in this case are stronger than those who are harmed by it."

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Jordan to host Euro-Arab seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, a three-day symposium on Euro-Arab cooperation in the field of energy will be held here on Feb. 6, according to Secretary General of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources Abdul Wahab Zu'bi, who is also chairman of the organising committee. The symposium is organised by the European Union (EU) in cooperation with the ministry, Higher Council for Science and Technology and the Economic Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA). The symposium seeks to bolster scopes of cooperation between the Arab World and the EU in the field of energy. Taking part in the symposium will be several ministers and secretary generals, as well as experts from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and the EU. A total of 120 researchers and experts are expected to take part in drafting a future plan of cooperation.

Sports medicine centre approved

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Tuesday announced its approval of the establishment of an advanced sports medicine centre at the cost of JD 250,000. The centre would deal with sportsmen's injuries, offer advice on the prevention of disabilities resulting from sports activities and injuries and other services. The Cabinet said that the centre would be joint venture to be carried out by the ministries of youth and health.

Gharalbeh, British officials discuss scholarships

AMMAN (Petra) — University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharalbeh Tuesday discussed with a visiting delegation from the British Agency for Overseas Development the question of sending Jordanian students on scholarships to the United Kingdom for post graduate studies. The discussion also covered bilateral cooperation in scientific and academic fields.

IDB grants JD 2.633m in loans

AMMAN (Petra) — The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) Tuesday announced its consent to grant 22 loans together worth JD 2.633 million, to finance industrial projects. The bank said that the loans would finance the purchase of primary products and machinery as well as the construction of factories and the purchase of land for the purpose. The projects included fertilisers, tin containers, textiles, tiles, tissue paper, home appliances, kitchen utensils and garments.

IATA head due

AMMAN (Petra) — The director general of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) is due here Wednesday on a two-day visit to Jordan. He will meet with Adil Dajani, secretary general of the Arab Air Carriers Organisation, Ahmad Jweiber, director of the Civil Aviation Authority in Jordan and Mahmoud Balqaz, chief executive officer of Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national air carrier. Discussions will cover world air transport issues.

Conference on environment ends

AMMAN (Petra) — An environmental conference held under the motto "Towards an environmental economy" concluded at the Grand Hotel in Amman Tuesday. The conference, which American, German and Jordanian experts participated, discussed, over a two-day period, several issues related to the shift towards an environmental economy. In the first session of the conference Jordan's Maher Abu Taleb presented a working paper entitled "Shifting from industrial economy to environmental economy." Another paper was presented by a member of the European Parliament on "the development of environmentally-safe products in the world." Other papers were presented by Mohammad Shaibar of the Higher Council of Science and Technology on the use of natural resources and recycling the council's Talal Al Akasheh on the protection of natural resources and an American expert on environmental legislations and policies in the U.S. The Royal Scientific Society's (RSS) Rizq Al Taani reviewed in his working paper alternative energy resources and Suleiman Al Hiyar and Suba Al Qusous of the Jordan Electricity Authority (IEA) dealt with the uses of natural gas to generating electricity.

Exporters group plans seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Exporters Society Wednesday hold a seminar entitled "The Changes of Jordanian Products in the Markets of Kazakhstan Republic." Participants in the seminar will discuss issues pertaining to encouraging Jordanians experts to Kazakhstan, investment policies tariffs and exchange rates in the former Soviet republic.

JTC head, Canadian businessman meet

AMMAN (Petra) — Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) Director General Ahmad Atwan, met here Tuesday with a member of the Canada Arab Business Council who is currently visiting Jordan. Discussion covered cooperation between Canada and Jordan in the field of vocational training, transfer of modern Canadian technology in this regard and despatching of Jordanian on scholarships to Canada.

China trade team to arrive

AMMAN (Petra) — A high-level trade delegation from China is due here on Feb. 2 to open trade talks with officials and businesspersons. During the several-day visit, the Chinese team is expected to discuss prospects of China buying more Jordanian potash and increasing its imports of Jordanian phosphate, said a source at the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce. The talks will also deal with prospects for launching joint ventures and increasing exchanges of visits by businesspersons, according to the source.

Jordan copes well with financial burdens — report

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has managed well in coping with the financial burdens imposed on it as a result of heavy foreign debts and the severe blows its economy suffered as a result of the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, a U.N. study reports.

The study, prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) as part of an assessment of the U.N. agency's member countries, estimated that the total debt of ESCWA member states stood at around \$180 billion at the end of 1992, up by nearly 15 per cent over 1991.

"The significant increase is attributed to the rise in borrowing by the (Gulf Cooperation Council — GCC) countries," said a summary of the report, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan

Times.

Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait accounted for the bulk of the external debt, it said, noting: "While the external debt does not represent a major financial burden on the GCC countries, as they can drain on their still substantial foreign reserves to service it, the external debt of other ESCWA countries, in contrast, represents a heavy liability, given their limited capacity for repayment and servicing."

In the case of non-oil producing Jordan, the report said that the Kingdom's external debts doubled during the 1986-1992 period, but rescheduling arrangements made between 1989 and 1992, and its ability to reduce the burden by around \$2 billion — by repaying some and cancelling contracted but undischarged loans — had earned it "an accommodating stance on the part of its creditors."

The report noted that Jordan's external debts had dropped to around 150 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) in 1992 compared with 230 per cent in 1991.

Following are major excerpts from the report:

In 1992, Jordan completed the rescheduling of its bilateral and multilateral debt (Paris Club), estimated at around \$5.5 billion. The rescheduling arrangements included the extension of debt repayment over periods of between 10 and 30 years, with grace periods of between five and ten years.

The approach of the London Club (commercial debt) was initially in marked contrast to the receptive approach of the Paris Club, owing mainly to the suspension of commercial debt repayments by Jordan in early 1991.

However, following the resumption of debt repayments and clearance of debt arrears in late 1991, Jordan was able to conclude arrangements with

the London Club.

The Paris Club rescheduling of Jordan's long-term debt resulted in an improvement in the country's debt service ratio, which dropped from 25.6 per cent in 1990 to 20.9 per cent in 1991. The ratio is estimated to have dropped further to around 16.7 per cent in 1992.

In 1991, around 73 per cent of Jordan's external debt was long-term of which 45 per cent were concessional, up by six per cent over the preceding two years, and indicating the significant soft-term nature of Jordan's external debt. Like Egypt, most of Jordan's creditors have been OECD countries and financial markets. Whereas no significant change occurred in Jordan's long-term debt to Arab countries (defined as bilateral and Arab development finance institutions debt) since 1983, increasing from \$516 million in 1983 to only \$566 million in 1991.

debt to Central and Eastern European countries increased from \$235 million to \$627 million over the same period.

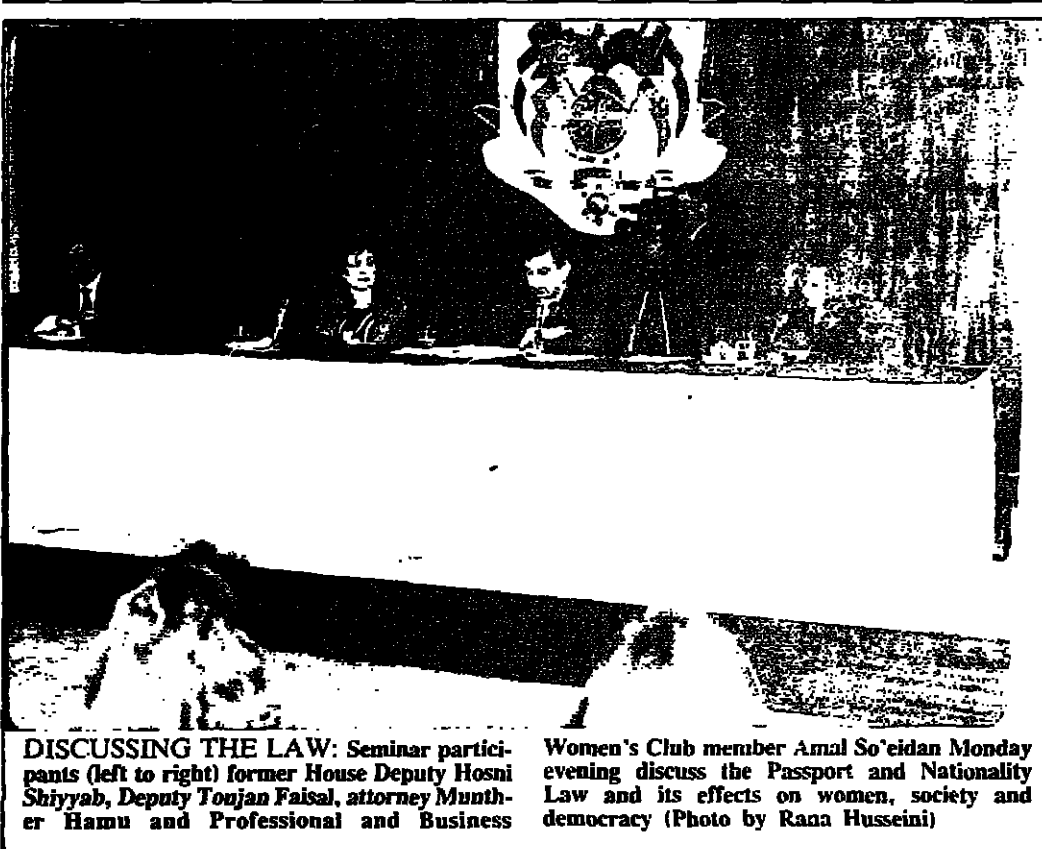
Of this debt, around \$570 million are owed to the former Soviet Union whose successor, the Russian Federation, agreed in late 1992 that Jordan repay its debt partly in cash and partly in kind.

While the GCC countries were able to draw on their foreign reserves and could easily resort to domestic debt instruments to finance the budget deficit, other ESCWA countries, especially Jordan and Yemen, found it increasingly difficult to finance the budget deficits, especially as financial assistance from the GCC countries ceased due to the position taken by the two countries during the Gulf crisis.

While Jordan responded with reforming its taxation system to increase domestic re-

venues, the Republic of Yemen, lacking in taxation base and instruments, resorted to borrowing from the Central Bank, thus leading to a further rise in the rate of inflation, estimated to have stood at around 35 per cent in 1992.

Most ESCWA non-GCC countries continued their privatisation efforts. While delays have been experienced in implementing the privatisation programme, Egypt has completed its monetary reform programme as agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Syria introduced an investment promotion law in 1991 to encourage investment activities of the private domestic as well as foreign sector. Iraq issued licences for three private commercial banks and one investment bank and inaugurated a stock market to trade in shares of these banks and other institutions.



DISCUSSING THE LAW: Seminar participants (left to right) former House Deputy Hosni Shihyeh, Deputy Tawaj Faisal, attorney Munther Hamu and Professional and Business

Women's Club member Amal Sa'aidan Monday evening discuss the Passport and Nationality Law and its effects on women, society and democracy (Photo by Rana Hussein)

Excavations in upper Zarqa valley reveal occupation from Bronze Ages

AMMAN (J.T.) — An Italian team of archaeologists led by Gaetano Falumbo of the University of Rome has conducted a project in the upper Zarqa valley, near the village of Sukhne.

The project aims at understanding the relationship between nomads and sedentary people during different periods, from the third millennium B.C. to modern times, according to a Department of Antiquities press release Monday. This is achieved through the identification and study of different types of archaeological sites.

The situation in the upper Zarqa basin is ideal for this kind of research, since little vegetation cover allows good ground visibility as well as from aerial photos.

The concentration of sites in this area is also particularly high, since the presence of permanent sources of water, such as Seil Zarqa and Wadi Dhuleil attracted people as early as during the most ancient periods of human occupation in Jordan.

The excavations conducted by the Italian team at Jebel Reheil, a site dated to 2900-2200 B.C., revealed the presence of complex fortification systems and at least two phases of occupation, one of the Early Bronze III period (2900-2700 B.C. ca.) and the other of the Early Bronze IV, 500 years after the first occupation.

In one of the trenches the archaeologists identified a courtyard area with two ovens still containing large quantities of carbonised seeds, mainly

wheat and perhaps barley, indicating the presence of a flourishing agricultural community which was perhaps also involved in long-distance trade since a copper ingot was found in one of the trenches.

A survey conducted in the vicinity of Jebel Reheil led to the identification of 218 previously unrecorded archaeological sites in an area where earlier archaeological work had identified only 35 sites.

The sites are mainly tumuli (ancient burial mounds or barrows) and tombs of different periods, built on hillsops, but there are also some sites of potential scientific importance dated to different periods such as Lower Paleolithic sites dated to over 500,000 years ago; a large Neolithic village 8,000 years old, a period when pottery started to be produced and agriculture became the major source of food supply; several fortified towns dated

between 2900 and 1000 B.C.; a Roman military camp on a strategic position along the Zarqa River and a series of early and middle Islamic villages, in an excellent state of preservation.

Sites which are often not properly considered during an archaeological project, such as traditional villages and recent bedouin camps were also recorded, in order to collect a complete record of human occupation and land use of this fertile but semi-arid area at the edge of the desert.

The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Research Council of Italy provide grants for the fieldwork and the project also received generous support and help from the Department of Antiquities and the American Centre of Oriental Research (ACOR), and the encouragement and assistance of the Italian embassy in Amman.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian artist Yasser Hammoud at Baladna Art Gallery (Wasfi Al Tal Street).
- ★ Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Raja' Abu Ghazaleh and Mohammad Al Jalous at the Jordan Writers Association.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Makram Khaghandoqah at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Omar Al Basoul at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition on the art of architecture at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

SPORTS ROUND-UP

- ★ A one-hour programme featuring a condensation of the most popular games of the week with play-by-play announcement at the American Centre at 5:00 p.m.

CONCERT

- ★ Concert at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 7:00 p.m.

DRAMA

- ★ Drama in Arabic entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre (11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.).

Haya centre to offer more children's programmes

AMMAN (Petra) — The Haya Arts Centre has prepared a children's cultural educational and artistic programme for the current second school term, according to Nabih Riyal, the centre's director. Mr. Riyal said private and public schools would benefit from these programmes which are designed to provide children with skills in sports and sciences and increase their general knowledge.

International Community School (The British Curriculum School in Amman)

The International Community School, in Khilda, requires a primary teacher for September 1994. The successful applicant must have full British, or equivalent, teaching qualifications and preferably have working knowledge of the U.K. national curriculum. Interested candidates are requested to contact the school office for further details and application form which should be returned to ICS as soon as possible.

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Disturbing idleness

FOR MORE than two years now the chapter of genocide and war crimes has continued in Bosnia. The western powers alone command the necessary tools to put an end to the chain of crimes against humanity committed there, principally by the Serbs. But western countries are still at loggerheads with one another as to what should be done in order to end the fighting. U.S. President Bill Clinton made the crisis in former Yugoslavia one of his key campaign issues by repeatedly criticising former U.S. President George Bush and other western leaders for their inaction in the face of the untold atrocities in Bosnia. President Clinton has yet to deliver on his pledges and has so far refrained from using effective U.S. clout to end the tragedies that have afflicted the Bosnian people.

Sensing this indecisive American stance, the other western powers saw no reason to take any initiative or action on their own. Several high-ranking U.S. officials have resigned out of sheer disgust with their government's ignominious stand. However, the Clinton administration has belatedly been making new noise about the need to make air strikes against Serb forces that are mercilessly bombarding Sarajevo and other Muslim enclaves in a bid to make them accept the results of the two-year-old Serbian aggression. Several NATO meetings were devoted to the subject of how to deal effectively with Serbian war record but nothing concrete has come out of those meetings. Now it seems that Paris and Washington are at odds over what to do next, after repeated, unfulfilled western threats to resort to air strikes against Serbian heavy gunners.

It is now reported that France favours an imposed settlement, while Washington seems to resist this call without a meaningful alternative, like lifting the ban on arming the defenseless Muslim Bosnians. It is utterly unacceptable to impose a ban on arms to all factions in rump Yugoslavia without differential treatment of aggressors and victims.

What makes the matter even more complicated is the U.N. reluctance to authorise NATO's decision to carry air strikes against Serb forces. U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali is reported to have denied that there has ever been a call for air strikes by U.N. peacekeeping commanders. Meanwhile, the western powers maintain that only the U.N. can authorise air strikes. The replacement of General Jean Cot, the commander of all U.N. forces in former Yugoslavia, and his aide, General Francis Briquemont, highlight the growing differences between U.N. commanders and the U.N. secretary general. General Cot has charged of Monday that Mr. Ghali who has refused to allow air strikes and not the other way round.

The picture that emerges therefore from the battlefield, the U.N. headquarters and the western capitals is something that is most disturbing. The Muslim countries have also to be blamed. There record on the Bosnian situation has been more rhetorical than anything else. If the international community sensed that the Islamic World did not sit idle in the face of the open atrocities being perpetrated against their fellow Muslims in Bosnia, Washington, Paris, London and all the other important centres of power in the world would most likely sing another tune.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily Tuesday expressed the view that Yasser Arafat's visit to Saudi Arabia and his talks with King Fahd marked the beginning of the process of ending inter-Arab differences and a start of reconciliation among Arab regimes. Mahmoud Rimawi said that the visit is important in view of the influence Saudi Arabia has on the other Arab countries in the Gulf region which had their relations strained with Palestinians, Jordanians and others that opposed foreign intervention in the Gulf crisis. The writer noted however that the Gulf states are now involved in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process and the time has come for them and the rest of the Arab countries to base their relationship on a firm and reasonable basis. The Arabs have to coordinate their positions regardless of their past differences because they together face American pressure on them to end their boycott of Israeli goods on the one hand and because they are together involved in the peace process with Israel on the other, said the writer. Furthermore, the writer referred to the Gulf states' support for the Oslo deal, between the PLO and Israel, noting that these states have already pledged to offer millions of dollars in aid to help develop the occupied Arab territories. He expressed hope that Mr. Arafat's visit would open the way for reconciliation among the Arabs on the widest possible scale.

A COLUMNIST in Sawt Al Shaab daily said that it was natural for the so-called sharks among the importers of food and medicine to be furious over the recent health minister's statements about manipulations of imported food and medicine, but it was surprising to many people to see the Pharmacist Association supporting the sharks and criticising the minister's statement. It was natural for the merchants and the drug store owners to fill the press with advertisements and notices decrying the minister's accusations and defending their own actions, but it is also natural for the ordinary citizens to back the minister and his measures to deal with corruption, said Ahmad Dabbas. The writer also said that it is the people who are most affected by the bad food or ineffective drugs and therefore the public is called on to come out strongly in support of the minister and his views and his measures to put the matters right. The writer said that the Jordanian people still remembers that Iraqis had fallen victim to the sharks when they despatched to Iraq shipments of contaminated poultry meat and medicines which caused a big scandal for the Jordanian merchants at the time.



Empty words don't put down nationalist extremism

By Anthony Lewis

PAULO ALTO, California — In the images that pass for statecraft, Bill Clinton's European tour was a great success. He charmed the leaders of Eastern Europe while denying them NATO membership. He was as impressive in a Russian as in an American town meeting. He and President Boris Yeltsin agreed to point their nuclear missiles away from each other.

But the missiles can be re-targeted in minutes. And charm will not count for much with Russians or East Europeans when they face the menace that really threatens them.

Fascism is the growing danger in Europe: extreme nationalism that expresses itself in murderous hatred of other ethnic, religious and racial groups. It is there in the rise of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in Russia, the ethnic feelings on the boil all around the former Soviet Union and the violence of Serbian terror in Bosnia.

Comfortable Americans have very little sense of how terrifying nationalist extremism can be. I had a tiny taste of it the other day in a public meeting here at Stanford University, when a number of Serbian-Americans rose to speak about the war in Bosnia. Serbs were only fighting for their freedom, they said. The world was trying to destroy the Serbian nation. Serbs could not live as part of another country, Croatia or Bosnia. Finally, one man denied that Serbian forces were shelling Sarajevo.

The speakers were no doubt sincere. That made the extremity of their words the more chilling. For there was the paradox that is the handmaiden of hate. There was the terrible claim that distant members of the mystical nation, like Germans in Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland in 1938, must be physically joined to the Fatherland.

The powerful feelings of

security in the post-cold war years. Nor doubt, I believe, that Serbian aggression in Bosnia is the first, urgent test of the North Atlantic Alliance's ability to meet the threat.

NATO has reacted so far with empty words: promises to bomb the Serbs if they go on shelling Sarajevo and trying to starve out Bosnians in other surrounded pockets. At the NATO meeting in Brussels,

Walker, one of five State Department officials who have resigned over U.S. policy towards Bosnia.

Mr. Walker spoke of "our capitulation in the Balkans." He said it "emboldens Zhirinovskiy and others like him, encouraging their use of nationalism as the ideology of intolerance, hatred and war." Can Mr. Clinton and his advisers really fail to understand that obvious truth?

Many westerners have pushed the daily horror of Bosnia out of their minds. It is a faraway place of which they know little, they think. It is complicated. The hatreds are ancient.

Those are the excuses, the avoidances. The reality is that Serbian extremists are trying to exterminate other people, other cultures. If we cannot hear the cries of the victims, perhaps we can credit the testimony of a neutral witness.

A Canadian diplomat, Louis Gentile, wrote to the New York Times about what he was seeing in Banja Luka, a Bosnian city occupied by Serbian forces: men and women, civilians, confronted in their homes and shot in cold blood; all 16 of the city's mosques destroyed, and half the Catholic churches.

"The so-called leaders of the western world have known what is happening here for the last year and a half," Mr. Gentile wrote. "They talk of prosecuting war criminals, but do nothing to stop the crimes. May God forgive them. May God forgive us all."

those Serbian-Americans showed how effective — how dangerous — a nationalist demagogue can be. Instead of grieving because their nation has been led into aggression by a thug, Slobodan Milosevic, they accept his demagoguery as gospel.

No serious person who looks at Europe today can doubt that nationalist extremism is the main threat to its peace and

President Clinton and the others said the words again.

So far as anyone can tell they remain empty. Mr. Milosevic knows that, and surely Mr. Zhirinovskiy does. "If a local Balkan thug can stand up to NATO and the world's last superpower, what might a Russian fascist with a nuclear arsenal feel confident enough to try?" The question was asked last week by Stephen W.

After the big bang, Italy needs new constellations

By Lucia Annunziata

WASHINGTON — One extraordinary result of Italy's political turbulence has been the collapse of the country's strongest and most popular party, the Christian Democrats. Remnants of the party, which had been a linchpin of the western alliance, have even renamed themselves, such as the Communists of Eastern Europe did after the fall of the Berlin wall.

The parallel is apt. For a half-century, the Christian Democratic Party stood at the core of one of the cold war's most successful political systems, one engineered by Washington and its allies to keep Italy's strong Communist Party at bay. Over time, Christian Democrats rivaled Communist regimes to the east in terms of their monumental corruption and the longevity of their ruling class.

In the wreckage of the system, some Italians now refer to seven-time Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti as their Erich Honecker. Once an all-powerful political fixture, Mr. Andreotti is now under investigation for ties to the Mafia.

The Christian Democrats anchored Italy to a political middle ground with a mix of Italian traditions — capitalism and Catholicism, anti-communism and liberalism, patronage and modernism. As the party broke apart, it sent shards flying to the extreme edges of the country's political universe. A landscape of polarisation was left behind.

The Communist Party, weakened in the '80s and declared dead after the fall of the Berlin wall, changed its name to the Democratic Party of the

Left and has emerged as Italy's strongest national force. The fascist party, long marginalised and small, is making a vigorous comeback, particularly in Rome and Naples. The Northern League, a strong regionalist party, has developed almost out of nowhere, advocating a tax revolt against the central government and a federal system to separate the prosperous north from the poorer south.

The United States helped build the First Republic after World War II with political and financial support. In 1948, Washington intervened with covert financial support for the Christian Democrats. This effectively excluded from power the Communists, who had emerged strong from the war. It was containment within a frontline state in the East-West struggle.

The Christian Democrats were surrounded by smaller parties that shared in the power in order to maintain a national consensus. Despite a revolving-door succession of prime ministers, stability was maintained for 45 years. But the end of the cold war dissolved the ideological glue of

this arrangement, and almost overnight the First Republic folded.

The financial reasons for maintaining a national consensus also disintegrated. Demands for fiscal discipline from the new European Union meant an end to the excessive patronage, tax evasion, kickbacks and bribes that made for political contentment but drained government coffers.

Cracks in the system allowed a disaffected group of magistrates in Milan to start prosecuting the extensive corruption. The public responded with the kind of enthusiasm associated with the circus in ancient Rome, cheering every revelation of corruption made against formerly untouchable politicians.

The Northern League, the fascists and the former Communists — all parties on the outside of the First Republic — collected the votes of protest against the old regime.

This polarisation is a step towards a permanent realignment of Italian politics. From an institutional point of view, Italy is abandoning the multi-party system and moving from

a proportional voting system to one in which two or maybe three parties will gain seats. Consensus government, formed by back-room dealings among party leaders, will be replaced by winner-take-all government created at the polls.

This change looks good on paper, but it will require a new mind-set for Italians. The main question that torments the public is not about extremism but about the centre. The centre, with its tradition of patronage, not only has governed for a half-century but is deeply a part of the main traditions of the country. Can Italy survive without a central force, or should another one emerge? Can the present extremes, on the right or the left, somehow become centrist? Or can the former, fragmented parties, even the Christian Democrats, regroup? The next round of elections will give us at least some of the answers.

The big bang has taken place, but the new constellations are not yet formed. The transition may be dangerous. Because of the uncertainties, Italy is experiencing high unemployment, a currency in de-generation, public cynicism and the ever present threat of political and Mafia violence. Italy's experiment is West Europe's first full-blown transition from cold war politics.

It is a revolution, but one carried out in the full light of democracy — and one that cannot be left to sink into chaos and instability.

The writer is Washington correspondent for the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera. This article is reprinted from The Washington Post.



United stand against U.N. secretary-general

By Annika Savill

"KAFKAESQUE" is the buzzword gaining currency among senior United Nations officials about life under Boutros Ghali in what they are fond of calling "this house." The secretary-general last week added another name to the list of officials who are departing over their inability to work with him.

Sources say Melissa Wells, the top U.S. official in the U.N. Secretariat, will leave before her term ends in April. As undersecretary-general for administration and management, her job was to seek ways to curb the U.N. budget — a *bête noire* of the U.S. Congress which has consistently prevented Washington from paying its U.S. assessments on time because of allegations that the world body is profligate.

In her letter of resignation, described by a senior colleague as "remarkably tough", Ms. Wells, a former actress of "mature charm", complained of the lack of teamwork with the secretary-general. She said he was "not fully benefiting" from the resources of his staff because it had been "too difficult and all too rare" for them to find out what he wanted to achieve. As one undersecretary said: "It does say something about the working atmosphere in this house."

That Mr. Ghali has an idiosyncratic style of management, and that the U.N. faces a difficult period of unprecedented demands for reform, is nothing new. But it is increasingly apparent that all the various camps in New York now feel they have serious grounds to object to him.

"He is neglecting the permanent members of the Security Council," said one senior diplomat. "It used to be the custom that the secretary-general attended the formal Security Council meetings. Boutros makes a point of not attending. He has appointed a special undersecretary-general whose main function is to attend in his stead. He makes no effort to consult what is effectively his board."

He has differed emphatically from the most important of the P5 members, the U.S., over policy on Somalia. He differed from the U.S. again, this time over Bosnia, by declaring in a letter that air power alone would not ensure the rotation of U.N. troops.

The Third World member-states, united in the so-called Group of 77, are no happier. "They're very disappointed in him," said a senior U.N. source. "They feel he has concentrated entirely on a few questions such as peace-keeping and peace-making — which efforts are anyway suf-

fering enormous setbacks — and ignoring almost entirely the enormous area of social need and Third World problems."

The staff of the U.N. suffer simultaneously from lack of consultation and interference. "He happily meddles in most things, but then does not follow them up properly," said one official. Even undersecretaries-general have had to seek approval from members of Dr. Ghali's staff far junior to themselves to make a routine trip abroad.

Dr. Ghali's response to all this is that his officials begrudge him for having disrupted their cozy bureaucratic coterie. And, as one senior diplomat said, "there is integrity in the madness. He has his own views and does not dance to the tune of the Permanent Five. He is clever and quick to form an opinion and is often right. The problem is just that he will not listen."

Dr. Ghali is the U.N.'s sixth secretary-general. Others have created equal in-house controversy for other reasons; Kurt Waldheim made himself unpopular with his staff for things like spending a lot of time getting a U.N. job for at least one unqualified relative.

But for the "integrity" factor, there is a precedent. Dag Hammarskjöld, the U.N.'s second secretary-general who was killed in a plane crash in Africa 33 years ago this autumn, was notorious for it. "He was obsessively stubborn in his own integrity," said one veteran U.N. diplomat.

Hammarskjöld's writings convey the picture of a man to whom no sacrifice for the common good was too great, but who by the same token saw himself as a Christ-like figure. Some of his colleagues say he was crippled by a combination of zeal, solitude and vanity.

"But he did systematically build himself a platform among the weaker and smaller nations, whom he believed the U.N. was there to protect," said a former colleague.

Hammarskjöld's vision, "that of third superpower, taking up the voices of the smaller nations, answerable only to itself. His peace mission to the Congo put him irrevocably at odds with the Russians; whether it was that controversy which cost him his life in the plane crash over Ndola has never been proven."

What has since emerged is that, had he lived, Mr. Hammarskjöld's reelection would have been blocked by Moscow. Had he lived and stayed on in the job, many believe he would eventually have split the U.N. in two. It was in death that Hammarskjöld was elevated to near-sainthood. Being a great secretary-general in life is harder — The Independent.

Perry smart, tough but political skills doubted

By Gene Gibbons

Reuter

WASHINGTON — President Clinton's new nominee for defence secretary has legions of admirers in the Pentagon and Congress but even Bill Perry's fans wonder if he is politically suited for the highly demanding cabinet post.

"Perry's a techie (technocrat). He has focused on defence technology all his life, and does it very well. But he's an unknown quantity on the bigger strategic and political issues — how to downsize defence, gays in the military, Bosnia, Somalia and things like that," said one defence expert.

A senior military officer said Mr. Clinton's nominee was "well respected by the uniformed side," but he added that Mr. Perry was "not known to be a compelling spokesman" on military policy.

One of the contentious issues the new defence secretary will have to face is reconciling U.S. military strategy with defence budget cuts that will make it hard, if not impossible, to staff, train and modernise the forces needed to implement the strategy.

"The services are going to be coming in asking for more money, and there isn't any more. So you're going to have this enormous firestorm, and the secretary will be right in the middle of it," the defence expert said.

In announcing that he had selected Mr. Perry, a soft-spoken former professor, to replace Les Aspin as Pentagon chief, Mr. Clinton called him "a real pro" with "the right skills and management experience for the job."

Mr. Perry, 66, is currently the administration's number

two defence official. His chance at promotion came after others spurned the opportunity to grab the nomination given up by retired navy Admiral Bobby Ray Inman last week.

During Jimmy Carter's presidency, he was undersecretary of defence for research and engineering. Mr. Perry headed a defence firm before that, and earlier in his career, was the director of GTE-Sylvania's Electronic Defence Labs.

An analyst familiar with Mr. Perry's service in the Carter administration said Mr. Perry had singlehandedly spurred development of the Tomahawk cruise missile and "stealth" fighter technology used in the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait.

"He's very quiet, deceptively quiet and gentle. But he's very tough despite this calm exterior," this source said.

Mr. Perry is also believed to be easily confirmable. "He is smart, thoughtful and highly regarded on both (Democratic and Republican) sides of the aisle. He might be a diamond in the rough," said a congressional source.

"Perry is a bright, capable guy. He's been a success in business and government. The question is, is he the person to round out Clinton's national security team — can he take on the press and otherwise handle the public role of defence secretary?" Mr. Korb asked.

Although foreign policy is not now expected to be a major issue in this year's congressional election campaign, the turmoil in Russia, North Korea's suspected efforts to acquire nuclear weapons and ethnic strife around the world are but some of the things that could blow up at any moment.

إلى هنا وصل

Red Brigades founder finds new mission in publishing

By Vera Haller
Reuters

ROME — By night, Renato Curcio is a prisoner serving time for his role as founder of Italy's Red Brigades guerrillas. By day, he is a man of letters, a publisher of books by the imprisoned and oppressed.

"I want to be known for what I do now," said Mr. Curcio, sitting behind a manuscript-strewn desk at his home in Rome.

Mr. Curcio was first imprisoned in a government crackdown on the Red Brigades' activities in the mid-1970s. He escaped from prison in 1975 in a bid to continue his political work.

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and Mr. Curcio himself.

But Mr. Curcio says the publishing house, called Sensibili Alle Foglie (Sensitive to Leaves), "Wasn't born in politics but in the human experiences of imprisonment."

Mr. Curcio was considered the master theoretician of the Red Brigades group which sowed fear among Italy's conservative elite from 1970 to the mid-1980s.

A legendary figure in Italy, he is renowned for never having touched a pistol or personally participated in any of the group's more than 3,000 acts of political violence.

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Moro.

The brigades held Moro for 55 days, evading a manhunt by more than 13,000 police.

They dumped Moro's body in a car parked symbolically midway between the headquarters of Moro's Christian-Democrat Party and of the Communist Party he was trying to bring into government.

Mr. Curcio's feelings about the use of violence for political ends are unclear to this day.

Former brigade members have said he was ill adapted to deal with the violent realities of revolutionary life, and in 1982 he began giving interviews from prison in which he expressed a definitive belief that armed struggle was futile.

In a recent interview at the publishing house, Mr. Curcio said his revolutionary passion waned during his incarceration and was replaced by a fascination with the effects of imprisonment.

Mr. Curcio wrote his first book, *Nel Bosco di Bistorco* (Bistorco wood), with other inmates in 1990 after they began researching the subject.

"We studied not political imprisonment, but the experience

of imprisonment of the body.

This includes imprisonment in jail or concentration camps and the imprisonment of a particular illness such as autism or a handicap," Mr. Curcio said.

Instead of offering the book to an established publisher, Mr. Curcio said he decided to publish it himself. A year later, with the help of friends outside prison, the publishing house opened its first offices.

After contributing from behind bars, Mr. Curcio became a full-fledged publisher last April when a judge granted his request to enter a work-release programme.

The judge cited an assurance from Mr. Curcio's mother that he was "no longer the same person who wanted to stage a revolution."

Mr. Curcio now oversees a small but bustling operation in a three-room apartment overlooking the main square of the working class Rome neighbourhood of Testaccio. There are 10 employees, most of them former prisoners.

Colourful paintings by inmates brighten the otherwise

spartan decor.

The first series of books distributed by the publishing house continued to explore the theme of imprisonment.

It included a book by a severely handicapped woman who began living on her own as an adult after spending her entire life in one of Italy's most notorious state institutions.

Another book from the series, "Princess", is about the experience of being a transsexual. It was written by a Brazilian transsexual who had just completed a prison term for prostitution and who now works at Mr. Curcio's publishing house.

A new series out this year studies the relationship between Italian society and growing immigrant groups from Africa, the Middle East and India.

The publishing house has released 16 books to date but Mr. Curcio hopes to produce 40 to 50 books in 1994.

"Our books have generated a big interest in the Italian cultural world. I think it is because we are writing about worlds that for the most part are unknown," he said.

Iran-contra — wheeling and dealing in the Reagan White House

By Pete Yost
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As the Reagan White House plunged into the chaos of the Iran-contra scandal, administration officials took care of the business at hand: They cut each other's throats and protected the president.

A portrait of political disaster emerges from detailed notes of Vice-President George Bush, White House Chief of Staff Don Regan, aides to Secretary of State George Shultz and others — and the notes are quoted extensively in the final report of prosecutor Lawrence Walsh.

Mr. Bush thought forced resignations would help quell the public uproar over the diversion of Iran arms sales money to the Contras, according to his tape-recorded diaries for Nov. 25, 1986.

"Regan should go. Shultz should go," Mr. Regan "ought to get this all behind him in the next couple of months," Mr. Bush confided to the president, according to the vice-president's recollections which he dictated into a tape recorder.

When Mr. Bush reported later that Mr. Regan had agreed to resign "the president was very, very pleased" and "he thanked me about three times," Mr. Bush told his diary. "He was concerned that Don would walk in and see us talking, so I left after about 15 minutes."

Mr. Bush showed Mr. Reagan newspaper articles suggesting that Mr. Regan, Mr. Shultz and National Security Adviser John Poindexter

"are all out there with leaks and peddling their own line." Mr. Bush said in his diary that he and Mr. Reagan "talked about the need to get the Shultz resignation stories in shape."

Mr. Shultz, meanwhile, was telling aides that Mr. Bush "is up to his ears in Iran" and that Mr. Bush was "getting drawn into a web of lies," according to one aide's notes. "The whole thing crushes Bush... I don't think he can get elected now on his own."

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director William Casey wanted Mr. Regan to get rid of Mr. Shultz. Mr. Shultz wanted the president to fire Mr. Poindexter. Eventually, Mr. Poindexter was forced to resign and White House aide Oliver North was fired. Mr. Regan stepped down three months later for failing to control the political damage to the president.

One of the White House's many problems in 1986: How to deal with a possibly illegal White House-approved shipment of Hawk missiles to Iran. The President told Mr. Shultz he had known about the Hawk delivery — but the president stood by silently two days later — when Attorney General Edwin Meese announced in a meeting of Mr. Reagan and his aides that the president hadn't known.

"They're rearranging the record," Mr. Shultz later told an aide, who wrote down the comment.

The scandal was a lawyer's nightmare. Had laws been violated by the secret arms sales or hadn't they?

White House aide "ex-plained" when White House counsel Peter Wallison tried to delete a sentence from a proposed administration statement that said all laws had been complied with in the Iran initiative. Mr. Wallison had grave doubts whether this was true — but "I was told" by Mr. Regan "that this is what the AG wanted said," and that the president did as well. Mr. Wallison wrote in his diary.

First lady Nancy Reagan told the White House chief of staff that she and the president were "very upset" by the mounting public furor, according to Mr. Regan's notes. According to his notes, Mr. Regan "told her we're going to have to dump hostages to save press's reputation, if necessary. She agreed. Risking presidency."

Prosecutors didn't discover until 1992 that Mr. Regan had notes. The ex-White House chief of staff said he left the originals at the White House when he resigned under pressure in 1987. But the Bush White House told Mr. Walsh that they couldn't be found. Mr. Regan supplied Mr. Walsh with his copies.

An aide discovered Mr. Bush's diaries in September 1992 locked in a safe in the Bush family residence on the third floor of the White House. Mr. Bush's lawyers didn't disclose the diaries' existence to Mr. Walsh for another three months, until the presidential election had passed. Mr. Bush released selected diary entries a year ago, but Mr. Walsh presented far more revealing entries in the prosecutor's final report.



ALERT: National guardsmen keep watch at an apartment building where 16 people died Jan. 17 during an earthquake that hit California (see page 8). Residents were allowed to enter the condemned building for 15 minutes at a time to collect personal effects (AFP photo)

Egyptian defendants refuse to talk to media

CAIRO (AP) — Suspected Egyptian radicals charged with attempting to kill Egypt's prime minister countered a government ban on foreign journalists covering their trial by refusing to talk to Egyptian reporters.

The court rulings come as Egyptian radicals are escalating attacks on police in the south. More than 30 police have been killed in the past year, and militants say they are avenging death sentences by military courts and torture of suspects in jail.

The killings are part of the "integrated" violent campaign to replace the secular government with Islamic rule, which has led to nearly 300 deaths in the past two years.

In Cairo, nine defendants were tried in military court for the assassination attempt on the prime minister. They refused to speak to Egyptian reporters. They said they did not trust the local reporters over Nasser and wanted the trial reported by the international media.

They also claimed they were living in a state of fear and asked to be released. They were held in a male doctor, who was showing signs of torture "in the most sensitive places" to a woman who was assigned to see them.

Normally, defendants in a state security court in Assiut also acquired two alleged Muslim militants charged with attempting to blow up a train in October 1992.

The defendants' ban on authorities stopped reporters and photographers for non-Egyptian media from covering the trial for a second time.

Foreign reporters were banned from the opening session Saturday. Fifteen defendants are on trial, but six are at large and being tried in absentia. The attackers missed their target in the car bomb attack on Dr. Sedki, but a schoolgirl was killed and 21 other people were wounded.

The government has regularly denied accusations of prison torture levelled by defendants and human rights groups. Authorities say there may be individual instances of torture and claim these are being investigated.

In the trials in southern Egypt, a criminal court in Assiut acquitted an alleged Muslim militant leader and five other men of charges of sectarian violence that led to the death of 12 Coptic Christians and a Muslim.

The case grew out of a property dispute between Muslims and Christians in March 1992, and a member of a Muslim group was killed in the village of Sanabou, near Assiut. Violence followed, culminating in an armed attack by about 40 Muslim extremists on Coptic farmers.

One defendant, Gamal Farhah Herediy, is allegedly a leader of the outlawed Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, and remained in custody in other cases. Among the other defendants were two Coptic brothers.

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Russian reformer's future in balance

MOSCOW (AP) — The status of leading reformer Boris Yeltsin became a hot topic Tuesday when President Boris Yeltsin's office said Mr. Yeltsin had not formally resigned as finance minister.

Mr. Yeltsin's departure would signal an abrupt change from the free market reforms of the past two years to a more conservative approach that calls for more subsidies to state enterprises and more Soviet-style social welfare programme.

Mr. Yeltsin said last week he was resigning because a cabinet shakeup had given conservatives too much authority. His move came after the resignation of the administration's top free-market reformer, Yegor Gaidar.

But on Monday, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said he had not accepted Mr. Yeltsin's resignation, and on Tuesday Mr. Yeltsin's office said no resignation had even been submitted.

"As of this minute, Yeltsin remains a minister as far as Yeltsin is concerned. Yeltsin hasn't formally submitted his resignation," Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman, Anatoly Krasikov, told the Associated Press.

Mr. Krasikov said "there were all grounds to believe" that Mr. Yeltsin will meet with Mr. Yeltsin Wednesday to discuss the minister's future.

Decision over Mr. Yeltsin's role in the new government could be a sign of conflict between Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Chernomyrdin.

Jordan wants to move

(Continued from page 1)

every problem that we have." "We do not ratify peace and then begin to negotiate it or the issues that have to be addressed," said the King. Obviously we have always been committed to the a just and comprehensive peace and I hope that we will see as a result of coordination and major effort progress being made on all the other tracks."

"I have been impressed during my visit and throughout this past period by contacts with the U.S. administration," the King said. "The president is a man and has an interest and concern and seems to know all the details and has come to know them in a short time, despite his responsibilities."

The King said, "I know he is genuine, trying to help us achieve for future generations peace and security in the entire region."

He said conflicting results of tests conducted on food items cast doubt on quality and the suitability of such products for human consumption.

In any event, the minister of supply said, his ministry had no role in the affair since it assigns the job of testing samples to laboratories which belong either to the Ministry of Health or the Royal Scientific Society or the Department of Customs.

He said the Ministry of Supply does not allow the entry of food items into the market unless accompanied by test results that prove they are fit for human consumption.

Mr. Ibrahim said his ministry fully observes all regulations related to proper transportation of food items and that he supported the measures adopted by the Ministry of Health.

There is a garbage market in producer countries, which seek to get rid of their undersized, sub-standard products, either by destroying them or selling them to countries like ours," Dr. Malhas said.

A recently drawn up regulation on food quality was approved by the Cabinet, he said, adding that the Ministry of Health was determined to implement the new control measures.

The new measures, he said, were "rejected by a certain group, whose major concern is to secure a higher profit margin."

"Some merchants have threatened, in a cable to the Cabinet, to stop importing food items during the month of Ramadan," when there is a high demand, Dr. Malhas said.

While the objective of the ministry is to improve its performance, this cannot be achieved "unless we admit our mistakes," he said.

Dr. Malhas, who took office in May 1993, paid tribute to all his predecessors saying they had performed their duties in the best manner.

Dr. Malhas said his criticisms in the local press were aimed at the drug control department at the Ministry of Health and not at local pharmaceutical industries, whose products are of good quality.

Mr. Ibrahim, the supply minister, also spoke on Jordan Television on Tuesday.

He called for a centralised body to control food imports since the task is now dispersed among six or seven parties. The overlapping of functions among these parties, he said, makes it difficult to maintain proper control.

Committees to probe situation

(Continued from page 1)

ligation and expose those tampering with food and medicine regulations.

They also demanded that the government "shoulder its responsibilities and expose the source of corruption as well as inform the people on the truth and put those responsible for the violations on public trial."

The six parties signing the statement were: The Arab Baath Socialist Party, the Jordanian Arab Democratic Party, the Jordanian Communist Party, the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party and the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party.

In comments on Jordan Television later Tuesday, Dr. Malhas said the Ministry of Health had drawn up new regulations for controlling food items and preventing the entry of sub-standard products into the country.

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No early relief seen for ailing tanker market

THE Daily Crossword

by Al Becker

ACROSS

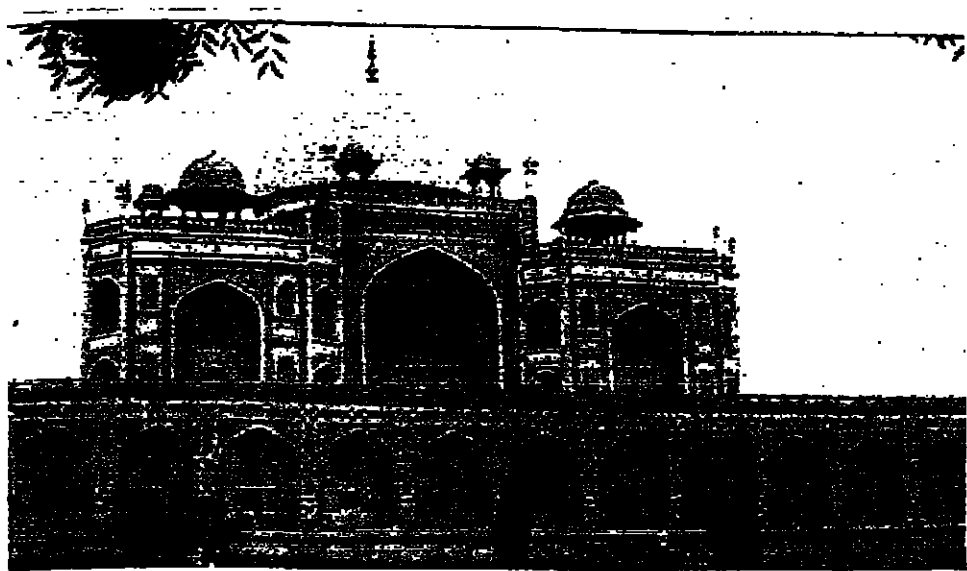
- 1 Elemental
- 8 Bed support
- 10 Stringed instruments
- 14 Blazer
- 15 Ms Gair
- 16 Negri of old
- 17 Swipe
- 18 Enthusiastic
- 19 Vestibule
- 20 John— (upstart)
- 22 Drive genus
- 23 Rupturing factor
- 24 High ground
- 26 Make certain
- 30 Canadian nine
- 32 Out of kilter
- 33 Memo
- 35 Unoriginal
- 39 Occurring each day
- 41 Bouquet
- 43 Signature for "The Flamingo"
- 44 Name in style
- 46 Contest
- 47 Sic! macia
- 49 Gave false info
- 51 "Where _____ tread"
- 54 British gun
- 55 Goodbad
- 57 The skie
- 63 Division word
- 64 First name in plane
- 65 Vietnam city
- 66 Feast
- 67 Gribble
- 68 Zola
- 69 Formal address
- 70 Barely gets by (with "sign")
- 71 Out of style

DOWN

- 1 Pass
- 2 Brougham
- 3 Check
- 4 Dies —
- 5 Place for wine
- 6 Condition
- 7 Young hare
- 9 Neaten
- 10 Works on furniture
- 11 Misappual
- 12 Across Burstyn
- 13 Cesser, e.g.
- 21 Upper stage for a rocket
- 25 Certain case: abbr.
- 26 Ordered
- 27 Essayist
- 28 Heavy top
- 29 Widely tourist
- 31 Foreign prefix
- 34 "Ye — Shoppe"
- 35 Arab headband
- 37 "Anselm and Old —"
- 38 Ogled
- 40 Hooped
- 42 Abalone
- 45 Motivate
- 46 Sweep down
- 50 Barely moved

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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



Indian tourism moves away from tradition to adventure

The tourism authorities in India have chalked out elaborate strategies to explore the hitherto unexplored facets of nature's myriad exclusive endowments to the Indian sub-continent. A host of idyllic abodes and mountainous terrains are being opened out for adventure tourism.

With an exciting blend of unbridled freedom, nature wilderness and spellbinding adventure, Indian tourism is now all set to see the international tourist.

As part of this endeavour, tourism authorities have started promoting various segments of special interest tourism like adventure sports and wildlife tours, beach tourism, fairs, festivals, conventions and conferences and summer and winter trekkings.

The new concept aims at attracting a new breed of tourists who come to India not only to savour priceless ancient monuments, but also to taste a bonanza of river running, hang-gliding, heli-

skiing, rock-climbing, ballooning, mountaineering and motor rallying.

The National Action Plan for Tourism, recently finalised by the government, aims at projecting India as an interesting and exciting destination of the nineties. The plan seeks to increase the share of the foreign tourist arrivals in the country in the global tourism movement from the current level of 0.04 per cent to one per cent in the next five years. It also aims at improving the facilities to tourists particularly the budget category and expanding them so as to provide an affordable holiday. A major objective is also to preserve and enrich the environment and make it an integral part of tourism.

While keeping intact the traditional image, India now proposes to encourage diversification of tourism, mainly in the field of leisure, adventure, conventions and in-

centive tourism, thereby responding to the changing consumer demands. Greater thrust is now being put on specific destination marketing, concentrating on specified circuit destinations in the overseas publicity programme.

With these changes which seek to supplement the country's cultural image that was highlighted earlier, the tourism industry is expected to attract more number of tourists from across the globe.

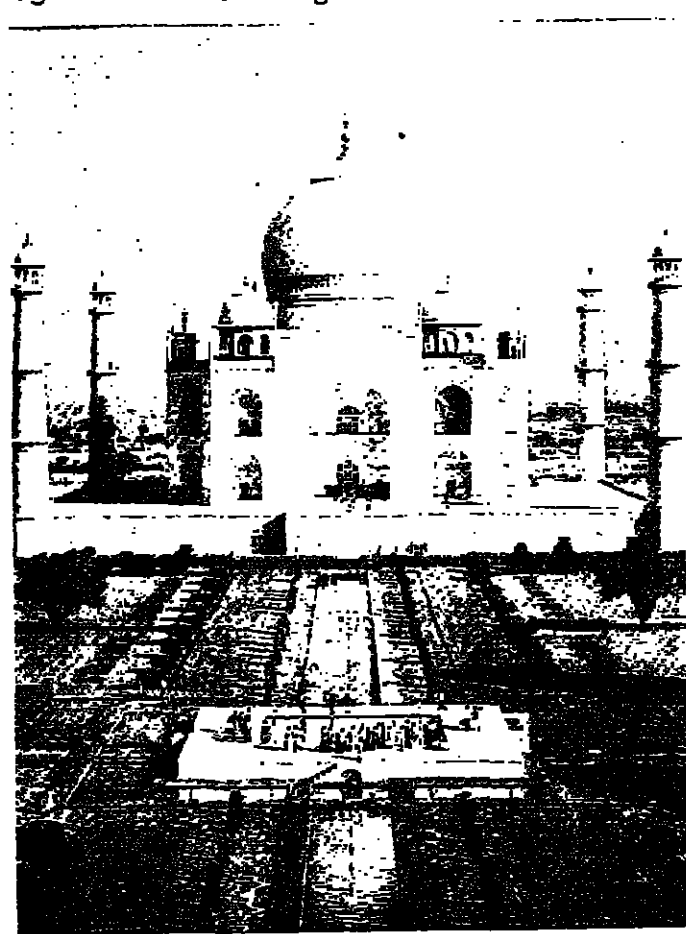
New potential tourist attraction spots have been identified with a view to promote them as centres for adventure and sport tourism through improvement in facilities and aggressive publicity and marketing efforts.

Since hotel industry is the heart of the tourism industry, several liberal incentives are being provided for its growth. In addition, a new scheme for developing camping sites is being started, specially for the low budget tourists to encourage domestic tourism. It has also been planned to introduce a scheme of paying guest accommodation for domestic as well as foreign tourists.

Since much of the tourism activities involve nature and its bounties, the impact on environment and possible damages to it are being

taken care of.

The emphasis is on balancing tourism harmoniously with the ecosystem without harming the interests of either.



CONGRATULATIONS



Al-Karmel Travel & Tourism Trading Co. Ltd.

General agents of



in Jordan

Congratulates the friendly Indian nation on India's Republic Day.

On the occasion of

THE REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA

AL-KHALEEJ FROZEN MEAT AND FOOD STUFF CO. (AMMAN-JORDAN)

Conveys its hearty greetings & felicitations to the people of India.

On the occasion of the Republic Day of India

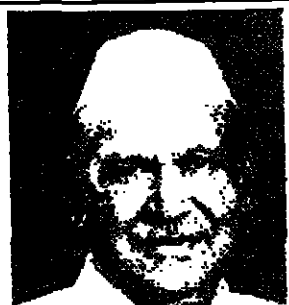
Indo-Jordan Scholars Club

conveys its hearty greeting to the government and Indian people

On the occasion of the Republic Day of India

Dr. Naser Al Maaitah, director of Zarqa University Services Est.

conveys his hearty greeting to the government and Indian people.



HJAZI AND GHOSHEH FOODSTUFF COMPANY

Warm greetings & felicitations to the president and people of India on the occasion of their Republic Day.



Greetings to the president and the people of India on the anniversary of the The Republic Day of India

Yousef Akkad and Sons Company.



MODERN VEHICLE TRADING CO.

Agents of TATA in Jordan and

ELBA HOUSE CO. LTD

Manufacturers of TATA Buses in Jordan

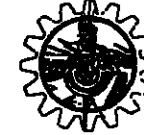
Congratulate the president and the people of India on the occasion of the

REPUBLIC DAY



JORDAN FERTILIZER INDUSTRY COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Jordan Phosphate Mines Company



Arab Potash Company

WISH

**THE PEOPLE OF INDIA
A HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY
AFFIRMING JORDANIAN FRIENDSHIP
AND HOPES OF CONTINUED
PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY**

India seeks friendship, cooperation

In an address to the nation on the eve of the Republic Day, the president of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, said: "India seeks peace, friendship and cooperation with all nations and peoples, specially our neighbours in the sub-continent and other countries in Asia with whom we have ties of kinship and culture."

He said: "As we enter the forty-fifth year of our republic, each of us must realise, and act upon the realisation, that increasingly, the world of today will test our every sinew and faculty, virtue and ideal, every system and sector. More than ever before, common sense and plain understanding of present realities enjoin that we must organise ourselves to stand on our own resources: Human, institutional, material spiritual, indeed, we shall have to strive ever harder, unitedly and with self-reliance, to go from strength to strength howsoever difficult the task may be."

CONGRATULATIONS
MUHMUD AL-SAHILI AND PARTNERS
GENERAL
CONTRACTING COMPANY (MAS).
SILVER STAR INTERNATIONAL Est (SSI)
(MAHMOUD AL-SAHILI SONS)
We extend our deepest felicitations for our friendly country INDIA and wishing the Indian people every progress on the occasion of the 45th Republic Day
M. AL-SAHILI

FELICITATIONS
PAK VAN SERVICES
Extend their greetings and best wishes to the people of India on the occasion of the
Republic Day of India

CONGRATULATIONS
A. R. Kevorkian Company
wishing
the people of India more
progress and prosperity on the
occasion of
The Republic Day of India

CONGRATULATIONS
On the occasion of
the Republic Day of India,
the president of Middle East Marketing Services Ltd. and its staff convey its felicitations and cordial wishes to the embassy and the people of India.

Congratulations
With Compliments on
INDIA'S Republic Day
From
KAWAR Drug Store

CONGRATULATIONS
to the Indian embassy
On the occasion of
India's Republic Day
We extend our best wishes for continued progress and prosperity to the friendly people and government of India.
Jordan Company for Supplies
M. Taweel ★ S. Shreim

ON THE OCCASION OF THE REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA

INDO - JORDAN CHEMICALS CO. LTD.
(A JOINT VENTURE OF SPIC-INDIA & JPMC-JORDAN)

CONVEYS ITS FELICITATIONS AND CORDIAL WISHES TO THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

Egypt, PLO sign economic accord

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed an economic cooperation agreement Monday to ease trade, investment and joint projects with the future self-ruled Palestinian areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The PLO signed a similar agreement with Jordan last month after criticism there and other neighbouring states that PLO leader Yasser Arafat's steps to reach peace with Israel could harm the economies of Arab states.

The agreement was signed shortly before Mr. Arafat arrived in Cairo to be briefed on Foreign Minister Amr Musa's visit to Israel on Monday to push forward Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Mr. Musa and his Palestinian counterpart, Farouk Kaddoumi, signed the agreement, which calls for economic cooperation in the fields of industry, agriculture, investment, tourism, technology, health and education.

Egypt, whose economy is badly in need of a boost, wants to play a role in the many development projects which are expected to take place in Gaza and the Jericho area of the West Bank once Israel withdraws from the two regions.

The agreement says Egypt will help in infrastructure projects and a study will be conducted on a free trade zone on the Gaza-Egyptian border. It

opens the way for Egyptian banks to operate in the Palestinian area and for concessions to ease the movement of commodities to and from Egypt.

Mr. Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, told reporters at the signing that the agreement was similar to one the PLO has signed with Jordan.

The most specific provisions are:

- The Egyptians and the Palestinians will give each other most favoured nation status in trade.
- Commercial transactions between them will be paid for in convertible currencies.
- To qualify as locally manufactured, products they want to export to each other must have a local production cost content of at least 40 per cent, either in the form of labour or raw materials.
- They will study the possibility of setting up a "free zone" in Rafah, on the border between Egypt and the Gaza Strip, for trade, industry and investment.
- They will coordinate on any projects that may have a regional dimension, such as power stations, roads, telecommunications and water desalination.
- The Palestinians will make it easy for Egyptian banks and other financial institutions to set up branches in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the Egyptians will reciprocate.

Two Massachusetts firms to open offices in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Massachusetts Governor William F. Weld announced Tuesday that two Massachusetts pharmaceutical companies, Genzyme and Odyssey Therapeutics, would open offices in Israel, saying the companies hoped to reach the wider region as a result.

"We're delighted to be the first through the doors of peace," Mr. Weld told reporters. "This demonstrates both the strong possibilities for trade between Massachusetts and Israel and the advantages of having a trade office in Jerusalem."

Mr. Weld, who opened the Massachusetts trade office in Jerusalem during a Aug.-Sep. 1992 visit, is leading a delegation of 30 businessmen and women as well as technical experts. He said the office had increased Israel-Massachusetts trade by 16 per cent since it was opened.

Odyssey Therapeutics will sponsor research on the aging process and immune deficiency at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and at Bar Ilan

University in Tel Aviv, and will market menopause treatment products manufactured by the Israeli firm Bioresearch in Massachusetts, said company president Michael Osband.

Genzyme sees Israel as a natural market for its treatments for gaucher, a disease mainly afflicting Jews, said Genzyme representative Zeev Zelig. The treatment's use of the ceradase enzyme markedly turns around those sufferers from the debilitating disease, which causes bones to become brittle.

Mr. Weld's delegation, which represents 22 companies involved in construction, tourism, telecommunications and information technology, discussed investment opportunities Monday with Palestinian businessmen and leaders in the occupied territories in the wake of the proposed Palestinian autonomy.

"They understood the need for institutions that will develop the economy," Mr. Weld said.

Algerian talks open amid confusion

ALGIERS (Agencies) — The Algerian government launched a national conference Tuesday aimed at finding a political settlement to fundamentalist violence, but most political parties stayed away from the meeting.

Five of the country's six main political parties refused to attend the two-day conference, and another grouping, the National Constitutional Rally (RNC), walked out of Tuesday's opening session, saying it saw "no point" in taking part.

The parties principal concern was the absence at the meeting of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), whose suppression early in 1992 has led to a fundamentalist guerrilla war which has cost more than 3,000 lives.

The meeting was opened by the head of the collegiate presidency, Ali Kafi, under tight security at the Club des Pins, about 30 kilometres from the capital.

The closed door discussions were being attended mainly by government workers, representatives of the main union federations and the national organisation of veterans of Algeria's independence war against France, won in 1962.

Faced with the lack of broad support for the conference, the government Tuesday cut back its goals for the meeting, which was originally to have chosen an Algerian president and two vice-presidents to replace the current High State Council, or collegiate presidency, whose mandate expires on Jan. 31.

A new plan put to the conference by organisers Tuesday said that the new leadership should rather be chosen by the high Security Council, a military-dominated body.

The move led the only Muslim movement willing to participate, the Movement for Islamic Society (MSI-Hamas), to threaten to quit the meeting.

Further confusion was sown when the government's evening paper, Al Masaa, said that



Armed security police keep watch at the Palace of Nations, where an Algerian national conference aimed at ending two years of militant violence opened Tuesday (AFP photo)

the high-powered four-man team from the FIS, led by the movement's national spokesman Abdul Kader Bensalem, was attending the talks.

This report named the delegation and said that its three other members had been temporarily freed from prison with a mandate to participate from top FIS leader Abassi Madani, serving a jail term for state security offences.

But the report was swiftly denied by the head of the commission set up to organise the conference, Yousef Khatib. Well-informed sources had reported last-ditch "contacts" between his team and figures close to the FIS, but officials had refused to confirm them.

The main eviled leader of the FIS, Rabah Kebir, said in Germany Tuesday that reports that his movement was attending the meeting were "pure lies."

But another senior Algerian

official said the banned front has accepted the principle of dialogue with the authorities.

"Regarding the Islamic sensibility... the commission has registered its acceptance of dialogue as a principle and a political step," Mr. Abdul Kader Bensalem told a news conference.

Algeria's authorities generally refer to the Islamic Salvation Front FIS as "the Islamic sensibility." Mr. Bensalem is spokesman for the National Dialogue Commission.

The four purported FIS delegates were not seen by journalists covering the opening session.

Though five of the six biggest legal political parties boycotted the conference, delegates were sent by labour unions, professional groups and civic associations, as well as dozens of minor political parties. The conference is intended to establish a transitional government that would

guide Algeria towards elections.

The ruling council is scheduled to cede power next Monday to a new president to be selected by the national conference. The president would oversee a transitional government that would set the stage for presidential and legislative elections in three years.

Preparations for the conference were marred by debate about whether FIS supporters should be allowed to participate.

As the date for the conference approached, one after another of the main legal parties decided not to participate, including the National Liberation Front, Algeria's former ruling party.

Of the six non-fundamentalist parties that received more than 100,000 votes in the last elections, only the moderate movement for an Islamic society was represented at the conference.

was about to quit the negotiations altogether, Mr. De Klerk said that "it will be a pity" if they did.

"For any party to boycott a free and democratic process seems an unwise path to take," Mr. De Klerk said. "Boycotting is an alien method for any party to use."

The alliance has so far boycotted the transitional structures set up to oversee government in the run-up to the election and has not committed itself to contesting the election.

ANC negotiator Cyril Ramaphosa was also gloomy. "I have very little hope at this point in time that there will be an agreement," he told domestic news agency SABA.

De Klerk: Time short for Freedom Alliance

PRETORIA (AFP) — President Frederik de Klerk Tuesday warned that time had all but run out for the conservative Freedom Alliance to rejoin South Africa's democracy process before non-racial elections on April 27.

"If agreement is reached today, a parliamentary session remains a possibility," Mr. De Klerk said, referring to the session that would have to ratify changes to the new constitution which will come into force after the election.

"But agreement must be reached now, otherwise it will be too late," he told a media briefing here.

The government, the African National Congress (ANC) and the alliance were meeting

here again Tuesday in a final bid to reach a constitutional pact after marathon talks through the night Monday ended in deadlock.

Government and ANC negotiations were gloomy ahead of the meeting Tuesday, with chief government negotiator Roelf Meyer saying in a radio interview that he was not hopeful of a breakthrough.

He said Tuesday was the final deadline for an agreement on issues which necessitated changes to the interim constitution agreed to be democracy negotiators and approved by parliament in December.

The alliance, comprising the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the Bophuthatswana black homeland and the

white right-wing Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF), wants federal guarantees entrenched in the new constitution to take effect after the April poll.

Under the election act, Mr. De Klerk has to proclaim the April 27 poll by Wednesday, but under special circumstances he can delay the proclamation for 30 days.

Once the proclamation has been issued, however, no further changes can be made to the constitution.

At the briefing, Mr. De Klerk held out the possibility that even if the alliance was not brought back on board before the poll, "we can continue negotiating after the election."

Responding to media speculation here that the alliance

was about to quit the negotiations altogether, Mr. De Klerk said that "it will be a pity" if they did.

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Violations date back to years

(Continued from page 1)

equipped to conduct many of the tests required by regulations.

According to the documents, she also pointed out that tests on whether food items met specifications and standards were being conducted at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which set those specifications, something which she described as unacceptable.

The minister released funds for refurbishing the laboratories and documents and the sources revealed that the situation had improved.

But in February 1990, the director of the laboratory was removed from her post and transferred to the department of pharmacy and drug control where she was to work as a pharmacist.

The decision was taken by a new minister of health who took over in a cabinet reshuffle in early 1990.

The director sued the Ministry of Health on the grounds that her transfer was "a punitive measure," according to the documents. But the Higher Court of Justice rejected the case ruling that it did not fall within its jurisdiction.

According to the documents, the director of the laboratories had said the decision to transfer her was made at the prompting of people who opposed her measure to have the laboratories run according to regulations.

An Arabic language weekly Thursday raised public concern about the efficiency of measures taken to ensure the safety of food and medicine when it quoted Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas as saying that a "good quantity of food and medicine that reaches the market is unfit (for human consumption)."

Dr. Malhas told the Jordan Times Friday that there was a deficiency in the laws governing the sale of food and drugs in the market. He said some drug and food importers were violating the few existing laws that regulate the distribution and sale of food and medicine.

Sources told the Jordan Times Monday that samples of medicines that used to be submitted to the pharmacy and drug control department before October for testing and registration were not recorded

and their whereabouts could not be accounted for.

The sources also said that some records were also missing from the department.

Acting Prime Minister Ma'n Abu Nowar Tuesday said the government was forming two committees to investigate the minister's charge (see separate story).

The Lower House of Parliament is today scheduled to set a date for a session during which the government would explain its policies on food and medicine and the steps it would take in light of Dr. Malhas's comments.

A statement issued by the spokesman and deputies of parliamentary blocs and committees said deputies would propose appropriate solutions to what they described as a "serious situation."

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday proposed the formation of a committee to investigate the charges raised by Dr. Malhas.

No information could be obtained on the situation at the central laboratories now. But sources say that two important tests to determine the safety of milk, meat and poultry are still not conducted in the Kingdom.

Sources say that no hormone tests are conducted on meat and poultry and no antibiotic tests are done on milk. The tests would serve to determine whether meat, poultry or milk could still have traces of hormones or antibiotics that may have been injected to the animals.

One pharmacist who conducted studies on hormones injected to animals said the hormones test was an important test that should be conducted on food before it was declared safe.

The law stipulates that no food items should be sold on the market before the Ministry of Health and other government departments certify that they are fit for human consumption.

But sources told the Jordan Times that the tests required to determine whether food items are fit for consumption or not are conducted by various government ministries and departments, leading to gaps and loopholes as well as inefficiency.

'Nothing less than full Golan'

(Continued from page 1)

90-minute meeting expressing condolences to Mr. Allaf for the death of President Assad's son Basal, who was killed last Friday in a car crash in Damascus.

Separate meetings at undisclosed locations were held with Palestinian and Lebanese negotiators.

Although the site was not announced, officials said Monday's talks were held about 1.5 kilometres north of the State

Department in a hotel district.

Acting State Department spokesman Christine Shelly said the new format enables the parties to "probe each other's ideas in a very relaxed kind of way."

She also indicated that the administration wanted to keep the talks as private as possible.

"We have felt that they would be most productive if the emphasis was on making progress and not just on making publicity," she said.

Clinton nominates Perry for defence post

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Bill Clinton nominated Deputy Defence Secretary William Perry Monday as the new replacement for Defence Secretary Les Aspin but only after Mr. Perry overcame objections from his family to taking the job.

In picking Mr. Perry for the position, Mr. Clinton hoped he had ended a troubled search for a defence nominee a week after former Deputy CIA Director Bobby Ray Inman withdrew from consideration with a diatribe against the Washington political culture.

Reflecting the difficulties Mr. Clinton has had filling the position, the 66-year-old Perry made the unusual disclosure at his announcement ceremony that he at one point rejected the job because his family did not want him to take it.

He said he left a meeting with Mr. Clinton Friday "fully prepared to take on the job" but talked to members of his family about it that night and informed the White House Saturday that if he "had to accept the job at that time, my answer would have to be no."

Vice President Al Gore told him to take more time to think about it and talk to his family. By Sunday, "I called the vice-president back and said, 'if you still want me for your secretary of defence, I'm eager to serve,'" Mr. Perry said.

"I did not want to drive my family into my decision without their support, and so I wanted to wait until I had their full support for it," said Mr. Perry. He and his wife, Lee, have five grown children, three sons and two daughters.

White House officials went into damage control shortly after the announcement ceremony, telling reporters Mr. Perry had always wanted the job but he had to talk to each of his children about it and it took time to track them down, since two are in California, one in New York, and two in Washington.

"He never said, 'I don't want to take this job,'" said a senior Pentagon official who briefed reporters at the White House. "He kept on saying, 'I want my family to be comfortable.'"

Family members felt "life was simpler" without Mr. Perry in the top job and worried about the time and energy he would have to devote to it, the official said.

Ultimately Mr. Perry answered these concerns, and it was not until Monday morning that Mr. Clinton officially extended the job offer to him, White House officials said.

A bemused but relieved Clinton insisted he did not have trouble finding a replacement for Mr. Aspin, even though he admitted earlier in the day he had sounded out Georgia Democrat Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to see if he wanted it and was told no.

"We had a very short list, and I quickly narrowed it to one. I had an interview with one person. I asked him if he'd take the job, and he did. I don't think that qualifies as difficult. Now, I have had some difficult positions to fill, this one wasn't," Mr. Clinton said.

Meanwhile Mr. Aspin said the U.S. military reserve forces of the future will be restructured to be leaner, more flexible and mobile and "will play a crucial role" in responding to regional crises and in meeting expanded "challenges of the post-cold war world."

In a Jan. 24 address to the Reserve Officers Association (ROA), Mr. Aspin also praised the reserve forces' peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and their contributions enforcing the no-fly zone in southern Iraq.

As a continuing world power, the secretary said, the United States needs "to be able to respond anywhere in the world because we don't know when the problem will arise." Mr. Aspin told the ROA's annual conference in Washington that reserve forces will be called upon on the future "to respond more often and more quickly."

The secretary noted that U.S. Air Force reserve units will be deployed overseas occasionally for short tours as a way to reduce the burden on the active air force. Interceptor squadrons and aircraft normally assigned to defend U.S. air space will be reduced and greater emphasis placed on aerial refueling.

France pledges new ideas to break Bosnian deadlock

PARIS (R) — France has promised to put forward new ideas to help end bloodshed in Bosnia after Washington spurned Paris' proposal for major powers to impose a peace settlement on warring factions.

President Francois Mitterrand told U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Paris Monday that "French proposals would very soon be put on the table," perhaps this week, the spokesman for the president's office, Jean Musitelli, said.

He did not give any details regarding the proposals. The new French initiative would follow Paris' failure to win U.S. support for a proposed allied move to force the hands of Bosnian Muslims, Croats and Serbs.

The New York Times in its Tuesday edition said Foreign Minister Juppe said in an interview Monday evening that he had appealed openly to Secretary of State Warren Christopher to have the United States pressure the Bosnian Muslims to accept a European peace plan dividing Bosnia and Herzegovina along ethnic lines.

Mr. Juppe said that Mr. Christopher had rejected the idea outright, the paper said.

In the interview, the paper said, Mr. Juppe charged that the United States was content to let the 21-month war drag on and did not realise the consequences of its refusal to play an active diplomatic role in helping end it.

"I told the secretary that the humanitarian track is not enough," it quoted Mr. Juppe as saying.

"If the Americans do not convince the Bosnian Muslims that they must stop fighting and that there is no chance that the United States would come to their rescue, then the United States will give them incentives to pursue the fighting on the ground," Mr. Juppe said in the New York Times interview.

"It would be a catastrophe. And we say to our American friends that they will be responsible for this," he said. "I don't think the international community has the capacity to stop people within that nation from their civil war until they decide to do it," the president told a questioner during a photo session in Washington.

"There are things we can do to retard it, to keep it within humanitarian limits, and I wouldn't rule out any of those options," he said. "But there has been no decision by anyone to enter that war on the side of one of the combatants, which is what some would like. They're going to have to make up their own minds to quit killing each other."

Mr. Clinton said his belief that the parties have it in their power to stop the killing has not changed. "I believe in general what I've always believed," the president declared. "There's not going to be a settlement in Bosnia until the sides decide they have more to gain from signing a peace agreement than by continuing the fighting."

The killing, he said, "is a function of a political fight" among the three factions and will not stop until participants decide they have more to gain from diplomacy than from combat. The president suggested that neither the North Atlantic Council — the top political leadership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation — nor United Nations Secretary General Boutros Ghali has any desire to use NATO air power, even in the circumscribed parameters outlined in last year's Athens Declaration and reaffirmed at NATO's Brussels summit on Jan. 11.

The president said he has not abandoned hope for a settlement, and he cited the changed situation on the battlefield as a possible sign that a peace agreement could be reached. Mr. Clinton pointed out that the Muslim government of Bosnia has apparently obtained arms, despite the U.N. embargo, so that "the circumstances on the battlefield are somewhat different than they have been for the previous 12 months."

News reports cite unfirmed reports that Bosnian Muslims in recent weeks have begun re-taking small amounts of previously Muslim territory overrun by Bosnian-Serb and Bosnian-Croat forces.

He said the Muslim government appears to be "most reluctant to sign a peace agreement at this time," but he suggested that with an accommodation "on access to the sea, protection of Sarajevo and the Muslim enclaves to the east, perhaps we could still get an agreement."

Meanwhile, Russia called Tuesday for a meeting of U.N. Security Council foreign ministers in an initiative on Bosnia presented as an alternative to air strikes against Serb targets. Deputy foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin told a news conference that Russia proposed to urgently convene a Security Council meeting in the near future.

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On Tuesday, the governing coalition and the main opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) decided to set up a special parliamentary panel Wednesday in a last-ditch bid to break a stalemate over the long-awaited political reform bills.

But prospects for a deal looked slim, according to leaders of both the ruling coalition and the LDP.

"The LDP will try to cooperate in passing the reform bills but it won't be easy because we'll have to consider the views of our lawmakers," said Yoshiro Mori, LDP secretary-general.

Two-thirds of the joint panel, made up of 10 ruling and 10 opposition lawmakers from both parliamentary houses, must agree on a compromise plan, impossible without the LDP's cooperation.

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NEW DELHI (Agencies) — India has offered a series of confidence-building measures, including a pledge that it will not be the first to make a nuclear strike, to ease acute tensions with old enemy Pakistan, officials said Tuesday.

They said the list of six proposals was handed to Pakistani High Commissioner (ambassador) Riaz Khokhar in New Delhi Monday, shortly before Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto made a blistering attack on India over disputed Kashmir.

Diplomats said the Indian proposals, apart from the nuclear offer, were a repetition of previous ones and were unlikely to improve relations that have gone from bad to worse since a rebellion erupted in Indian-ruled Kashmir four years ago.

"Bhutto's speech was clearly aimed at building up Kashmir as an international issue and indicated that she had no intention of moving towards a deal with India at this stage," said one Western diplomat, who asked not to be identified.

"Kashmir is Pakistan's jugular vein and we will not allow our jugular vein to be trampled under the feet of repression," Ms. Bhutto said in a televised address to the nation. "God willing, the day is not far off when Kashmir will be with us."



The new U.N. commander for Bosnia, General Michael Rose from Britain, is escorted by British soldiers as he walks along Sarajevo Airport after taking over command of the U.N. force (AFP photo)

Geneva at foreign minister level to press the warring sides to sign a deal on territorial division.

Mr. Churkin said Russia wanted U.N. secretary-general Ghali to prepare a detailed report on the situation in Bosnia to determine who was to blame for continuing bloodshed.

He said Russia would also press for a Security Council resolution providing for strict observance of a ceasefire, security of aid convoys, and strengthening U.N. "safe areas."

"The utmost priority now is to divide political power territorially between Muslims, Serbs and Croats," Mr. Churkin said.

Fighting continued in Bosnia as Bosnian Croat forces launched an artillery and rocket attack on government-held territory in the southwest, apparently targeting a Muslim stronghold on a key supply road, U.N. officials said Tuesday.

U.N. military spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Bill Aikman said a "significant battle" flared around Croat separatist troops (HVO) surged out of the town of Prozor towards government-controlled Jablanica Monday.

Col. Aikman said HVO forces around Prozor bombarded central residential and outlying districts of Jablanica and the government-controlled part of Gornji Vakuf, the next main town of the north.

More than 130 rockets from HVO multi-barrelled launchers ploughed into Gornji Vakuf while artillery pounded of Jablanica confined the U.N. Spanish peacekeeping battalion there to bunkers. Col. Aikman said.

He also said Croat troops had stormed into a relatively undefended Muslim helmeted Here on front lines near Prozor, where Bosnian authorities had told the U.N. Protection Force that 25 civilians had been murdered.

"We are sending in U.N. observers this morning to verify the situation, try to find out what happened. The village is right on the confrontation line and fighting is still going on, so it will be difficult," Col. Aikman said. He emphasised that the massacre report was unconfirmed.

In a separate development, the British Aircraft carrier Ark Royal set sail Tuesday for the Adriatic Sea to support British troops in Bosnia, a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

The Ark Royal relieves its sister-ship Invincible, which is ending a six-month tour in the Adriatic, the spokesman said.

The carrier, which has 1,200 crew, is equipped with sea Harrier jump jets — capable of carrying out airstrikes and reconnaissance — as well as Sea King helicopters.

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Parents were so fearful of being separated from their children that authorities offered counselling for mothers and fathers as well as students.

"Parents are still emotionally distraught about being separated from the young child, or even an 18-year-old," School Board President Leticia Quezada said on KCAL-TV.

People who lost their jobs when small businesses closed because of earthquake damages have flocked to relief centres to apply for unemployment.

Federal Emergency Management Agency officials said about 40,000 people have applied for some form of financial aid.

In an endeavour to keep life

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Disarmament conference opens

GENEVA (AFP) — The 39-nation U.N. Conference on Disarmament opened here Tuesday with French Ambassador Gerard Errera denouncing North Korea's refusal to allow international inspections of its nuclear sites. Mr. Errera, chairman of the conference, said Pyongyang's refusal cannot be "treated as only a regional issue." He said the world's major nuclear powers — the United States, Russia, France, Britain and China — could not "accept to impose nuclear constraints on themselves if other countries continue to secretly develop nuclear weapons programmes." North Korea suspended inspection of its nuclear sites by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in January 1993 and three months later threatened to pull-out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, sparking fears that it was developing or had already developed a nuclear bomb. The U.N. conference here, aimed at securing pledges from the nuclear powers for a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT), is to set up an ad-hoc committee to negotiate the treaty.

Poll: Clinton liked by 60% of Americans

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton's year into his mandate, has left a favourable impression on 60 per cent of Americans, mainly for his handling of the economy and foreign policy, according to Washington Post-ABC News poll published Tuesday. On the down side, however, slightly more than 50 per cent felt Mr. Clinton had done not much or very little in his first year in office, and 46 per cent felt he did not keep his major campaign promises. The poll, concluded Sunday and published Tuesday by the daily, was not so flattering for Congress, which got a 29 per cent approval rating. Mr. Clinton is to give his state of the union address at 9:00 p.m. (0200 GMT) Tuesday before a joint session of Congress, which reconvenes after a two-month winter break. The survey of 1,507 adults found that 60 per cent had a favourable impression of Mr. Clinton, and 55 per cent had a favourable impression of his wife, Hillary. By comparison, Mr. Clinton's political rivals, Senate minority leader Robert Dole and billionaire and former presidential candidate Ross Perot, got much lower favourable scores of 38 and 32 per cent respectively.

Former Greek bank boss dies after attack

ATHENS (R) — The former chairman of Greece's largest commercial bank died in hospital Monday after a guerrilla shot him four times at close range. A hospital spokesman announced Mihalis Vranopoulos' death shortly after the left-wing November 17 guerrilla group said it shot the former banker because of his role in the purchase of a state-owned cement company in 1992. Mr. Vranopoulos died 12 hours after the shooting. He was hit while walking to work in central Athens Monday morning. Bullets from a .45 calibre semi-automatic pistol ripped through his pancreas, liver, colon and kidney. Doctors operated on Mr. Vranopoulos for more than six hours to try to save his life. November 17 sent a shot Mr. Vranopoulos to the private Sky Television Station, saying it shot Mr. Vranopoulos for "high treason" in the purchase of Heracles General Cement Company. Mr. Vranopoulos, 48, was the chairman of the state-run National Bank of Greece when it teamed up with Italy's Calcestruzzi and bought 70 per cent of Heracles for \$225 million.

2 satellites lost in Ariane failure

KOUROU, French Guiana (R) — Two French-made satellites worth over \$250 million were lost after the third stage of Western Europe's Ariane rocket abruptly shut down following its launch from French Guiana, officials said. "The third stage stopped working... we cannot give further information at this juncture," Arianeespace President Charles Bigot told reporters. He said investigators would seek to determine the cause of the failure. A news conference was to be held in Kourou at 10:00 a.m. (1300 GMT) Tuesday. The Ariane 44LP rocket lifted off at 6:37 p.m. (2137 GMT). Space officials said the third stage functioned for at least one minute. The rocket, Western Europe's 63rd Ariane, was carrying Turkey's first national satellite Turksat 1 and Eutelsat 2 F-5 for the European Telecommunications Satellite Organisation. Mehmet Kostepe, Turkey's minister of communication and transport, said the cost of the Turksat programme — two satellites and launches, two ground stations and insurance was \$315 million. The second Turksat satellite was scheduled for launch by an Ariane rocket later this year.

10 die in China Sea ship blaze

HONG KONG (AFP) — Ten seamen died when their Shanghai-bound tanker split in two and caught fire in a storm on the South China Sea Tuesday, search and rescue officials in Hong Kong said Tuesday. The wreck of the 23,000-tonne Cosmas A was spilling its cargo of Indonesian crude oil, but pilots overflying the scene said high seas and strong winds were breaking up the slick. "The bow part has been burned out, and the stern is still burning," said a spokesman for Hong Kong's Marine Rescue Coordination Centre. Twenty-four others survived the disaster, and were due to arrive in Ho Chi Minh City Thursday on the container ship Ratana Manee, which rescued them, the spokesman said. One seaman, from Greece, was confirmed dead after the Cosmas A caught fire about 200 kilometres off the northwest corner of the main Philippine island of Luzon.

Hosokawa wins breather

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, waging a steep uphill battle to save his plan to clean up Japan's rampant political corruption, persuaded a grudging opposition Tuesday to discuss a last-ditch compromise.

Mr. Hosokawa and his eight-group alliance are struggling to survive the toughest test of their five-month rule — passage of reform bills aimed at the first radical overhaul of the discredited political and electoral systems since 1947.

The reform package, rejected by the upper house last Friday, will expire if it is not enacted by Saturday, when the current parliamentary session ends. Mr. Hosokawa would then face pressure to resign or call elections.

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Driving rain batters L.A. quake victims

LOS ANGELES (R) — Driving rain Tuesday brought new misfortune to earthquake victims living in makeshift shelters and army tents, causing further problems to damaged structures.

The rain began Monday night, with nearly an inch falling on the stricken area.

Victims housed in tent cities erected by the National Guard have been living outside their homes since last Monday when the earthquake, measuring 6.6 on the open-ended Richter Scale, struck before dawn.

The tremor destroyed more than 11,000 housing units, leaving 25,000 homeless. The quake killed 57 people and injured more than 8,000.

Losses have been estimated at over \$30 billion, making the quake the costliest natural disaster in U.S. history.

Water and electricity have been restored to most residents but aftershocks are still rolling through the area, keeping nerves on edge.

The tents, each capable of holding about 20 people, are

not waterproof, and occasional leaks are causing discomfort.

Stores ran out of plastic sheeting to cover holes knocked out in homes by the tremor.

The rain further snarled already nightmarish traffic. Highways and local streets have become virtual parking lots during commuter hours.

Many commuters opted to stay home last week to wait out the traffic jams or repair their homes. But by Monday, they undertook trips that lasted hours.

Yet, many residents who braved the commute wondered if drivers would be able to face lengthy delays for months to come. L.A.'s buckled freeways are expected to take up to a year to repair.

Amid the nightmarish freeway commutes were signs of recovery. Commuters were turning to public transportation. From hard hit Santa Clarita, commuter train ridership rose to 20,000 per day from 1,000 before the quake. Others were car pooling.

In an endeavour to keep life

Jackson near settlement in sex-abuse suit

LOS ANGELES (R) — Lawyers for Michael Jackson and the boy who has accused him of sexual molestation worked Monday to hammer out the final details in a settlement that would require the singer to pay millions of dollars. A court hearing was scheduled for Tuesday in the 14-year-old boy's civil suit against Jackson, raising widespread speculation that a settlement would be presented for a judge's approval. A source close to the case confirmed that attorneys were close to an agreement but said it may take longer to finalise it. Such a deal would cast doubt on the chances that prosecutors would go ahead with criminal charges against Jackson. In another blow to the embattled entertainer, prosecutors Monday cleared the boy's father of accusations of Jackson's camp that he tried to extort \$20 million from the pop star in exchange for his silence. The agreement would call for Jackson to pay the boy an "eight-figure" settlement, more than \$10 million, in return for dropping the suit, the Los Angeles Times reported, citing sources close to the negotiations. The highly publicised case appeared headed for an out-of-court settlement despite Jackson's impassioned vow to defend himself and clear his name. The 35-year-old singer has maintained his innocence, saying he was victim of a failed extortion plot orchestrated by the boy's father, a wealthy Beverly Hills dentist.

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Communion nearly the last supper at British church

LONDON (R) — Communion nearly became the last supper for English Vicar Brian Leathley and 12 worshippers when they drank from a contaminated chalice. Today newspaper reported Tuesday. It said they all suffered stomach upsets after drinking wine from the chalice at the Anglican Church in Kingsclere

Stasi hunt could spoil German campaign again

BOON (R) — While the comeback of Katarina Witt is sure to attract most Germans' attention at the Winter Olympics, the hunt for sporting spies from her former East German homeland is in danger of flaring up again after the scandal at the Albertville games two years ago.

Bob pilot Harald Czudaj was the victim of 1992. Czudaj's admissions that he was blackmailed into working for the hated Stasi state security police overshadowed the Germans' triumphs as the top medal-winning nation.

Spying allegations involving former Olympic bob champion Wolfgang Hoppe have already dominated the German team's build-up to Lillehammer.

Officials know there is a serious risk that embittered East Germans, determined to expose anyone who passed on information to the Stasi, could name more sports stars as Stasi "grasses" (informers) during the games to gain the maximum publicity.

German Olympic chief Walther Troeger has told competitors from the former GDR to examine their relationship with Stasi agents, who watched every sport carefully, and see whether anything has been written in Stasi files incriminating them.

Troeger is determined to clear the air on the subject

before the Olympics start.

"I will do everything I can to make sure we have peace and quiet in Lillehammer," Troeger said.

More than four years have passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall and subsequent unification. But German sport, like much of the country's society, still seems as divided as ever.

The Nordic combined skiing team has been through a bitter dispute this season because of arguments over different techniques between trainers from the former East and West Germany.

Hoppe, who carried the German flag at the opening ceremony in Albertville, has had problems extending his contract with the German army because of Stasi allegations.

Hoppe, the most successful bob pilot ever with 27 medals at Olympic, world and European championships, admits to telling the Stasi during an attempt by an Austrian sportsman to lure an East German away to the West in 1983. But he claims his relationship with the Stasi did not harm anyone.

"You can only work with someone who is willing to help. I was never willing," Hoppe said.

German bobsleigh coach Raimond Biege said the affair was destroying the atmosphere

in the bob camp because there were contrasting views.

"Those who did not experience it (life in former East Germany) see it differently," Biege said.

Hoppe added: "Those people who want to get past me in sporting terms, perhaps see the issue as something they have in reserve."

In Albertville, luge champions Georg Hackl and biathlete Fritz Fischer were the only sportsmen from the former West Germany to contribute to the total of 10 gold medals.

The affable Bavarian Hackl should be a major contender again on the luge track but former East Germans have some of the best chances to get on the podium again.

Former GDR speedskier Gunda Niemann, gold medalist in the 3,000 and 5,000 metres in Albertville, is one of the hottest tips for further triumphs. Sissi Erdmann is another ex-GDR star who is a major contender in the women's luge.

Alpine skier Katja Seizinger could be one of western Germany's main hopes after her bronze medal in the super-G two years ago and last year's world title success in the discipline.

Despite the hooeybolle sur-

rounding her return to competition, Witt will have to pull off a major surprise to win a medal.

The sport has moved on technically since she won her last medal at the 1988 Calgary Olympics and her performance at last week's European Championships was some way short of the necessary.

Some cynics are quick to point out that her comeback has been conveniently timed with an autobiography.

When the 1984 and 1988 Olympic champion steps out to skate her free programme to the haunting anti-war song "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?", made famous in Germany by Marlene Dietrich in 1962, the image sent around the world will be of German harmony and union.

Witt, who used to be portrayed in East Germany as a shining symbol of communism, will be roared on in Lillehammer by Germans from east and west alike.

But the harmony will only be in the chords of the song. It will take a lot longer before the German sports world, like German society, has forgotten all the divisions and problems of the past and become one unit again.

Sabatini knocks Novotna out of open as Graf, Date and Sanchez advance

MELBOURNE, Australia (Agencies) — Argentina's Gabriela Sabatini, searching for her first title in 30 months, bounced back from her sickbed to knock Wimbledon finalist Jana Novotna out of the Australian Open here Tuesday.

Fourth seed Sabatini brushed aside the Czech republic fifth seed 6-3, 6-4, to reach the semifinals, where she will play second seed Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain.

The Argentinian's appearance was in doubt right up to the night match because of an unspecified illness for which she needed to consult a doctor.

It was Sabatini's 16th semi-final in 34 Grand Slam events and she goes into Thursday's semi-final against Sanchez-Vicario holding a 12-7 record over the Spaniard. But on hardcourt surfaces, Sanchez-Vicario leads 3-2.

Earlier in the day, the Spaniard put an end to Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere's big-time tennis career with a 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 victory in searing temperatures.

Sabatini has played in 27 events since her last title in the 1992 Italian Open.

Currently ranked number six, it is the first time Sabatini has been out of the women's top five since September 1987.

Sabatini said she felt dizzy and had an upset stomach when she woke Tuesday.

"I woke up feeling very dizzy and I was not feeling too good ... I felt like throwing up," Sabatini said.

"A doctor gave me a shot of



Gabriela Sabatini Tuesday turns to her family in celebration after defeating Czech Jana Novotna at the Australian Open (AFP photo)

anti-nausea to stop the symptoms and I went back to sleep until four o'clock."

Sabatini said she never intended to pull out of the quarterfinal match and she felt better when she practised at the stadium late in the afternoon.

The Czech said after her loss that there had been "too much fuss about nothing" over Sabatini's reported illness.

"I heard about it when the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) called me at the hotel to tell me that Gabriela was ill. I don't know why they called me," Novotna said.

Earlier Tuesday, top seed Steffi Graf tamed the power game of giant American teenager Lindsay Davenport to reach the semifinals.

The German world number one was far too consistent for the towering Davenport, winning 6-3, 6-2 in stifling heat on

to move and I think she knows she can get in better shape physically," she said.

Davenport bled the "tower of power" opponent who matched her for power was disconcerting.

"My natural style is to hit the ball back, harder, which probably wasn't too smart today because I was making a lot of errors," said Davenport, who is looking forward to reporting for class at Murrieta Valley High School in California Thursday.

In the other match ambidextrous Date, urged on by cheering, flag-waving compatriots, delivered a left-right combination to oust Martinez from the quarterfinals.

Date switched her racket from hand to hand and downed the Spaniard 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 to become only the second Japanese woman to make a singles semifinal at a Grand Slam tournament.

Kazuko Sawamatsu made the semifinals here in 1973, losing to Evonne Goolagong. Sawamatsu helped coach Date when the new star was a junior.

Date, who is naturally left-handed, began playing tennis as a right-hander but hit a handful of shots with her left hand during the match — most of them successful.

"I don't really practise with my left hand, but it does sometimes happen during a match that it feels more natural," Date said.

Tyson could be free earlier than scheduled

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Mike Tyson could become a free man much sooner than scheduled under a reported deal in the works between his attorneys and the prosecutors who helped send the boxer to prison.

Tyson, convicted of raping Desiree Washington in an Indianapolis hotel room in 1991, would admit the crime in return for prosecutors agreeing to an amendment of his six-year sentence to time served. WTHR-TV in Indianapolis reported Monday night.

Both sides may be willing to reach such a deal to avoid an upcoming hearing in the Indiana Court of Appeals to consider whether the prosecutor's office withheld important evidence, the report said.

WTHR said neither side was talking publicly about the deal, and did not disclose its sources for the report.

Tyson attorney Alan Dershowitz, reached at his home in the Buxton area late Monday, said he could not comment on whether any representatives for Tyson were pursuing negotiations that could lead to his early release.

"I've had no discussions" with the prosecutor's office, Dershowitz said. "I am going ahead and preparing for the hearing."

Rob Smith, a spokesman for Prosecutor Jeffrey Modest, could not be reached for comment at his home late Monday. The court of appeals rejected Tyson's first appeal to reverse his 1992 conviction.



Mike Tyson

Dershowitz has taken that appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, but it has not agreed to hear the case yet.

The defence also pursued a second round of appeals on its contention that Tyson should have a new trial because the prosecutor's office withheld from the defence team information that Washington intended to sue Tyson for civil damages. The defence claims that showed Washington motivated to get rich from a potentially large damage award against the former heavyweight boxing champion.

WTHR also reported that attorneys for Tyson and Washington are discussing an out-of-court settlement in the civil case.

Washington was a contestant in the Miss Black America pageant held in Indianapolis in July 1991, and Tyson made an appearance at the pageant.

Valderrama voiced best S. American player

MONTEVIDEO (AFP) — Colombian soccer star Carlos Valderrama was voted best South American player here Monday. The poll was carried out by Uruguayan daily newspaper El Pais, in conjunction with other journalists from South America and Europe. It was the second time in six years that Valderrama, 32, who plays in midfield for Colombian club Junior, has won the prize.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Delecour forges ahead

MONACO (AFP) — Frenchman Francois Delecour turned on the power to forge clear at the head of the Monte Carlo Rally here Tuesday. Delecour, looking for his first win in the event after finishing runner-up last year, won all three special stages of the morning in his Ford Escort. That performance left him 50 seconds clear of world champion Juha Kankkunen, in a Toyota Celica, with former world best Carlos Sainz of Spain in third in a Subaru, 1 minute 13 seconds off the pace. These three now seem the only realistic contenders — barring accidents — for the title. Delecour, starting each stage first as the rally leader, said: "I've been driving as close as possible to the walls of snow at the edge of the course — that way, I can spray a bit of snow on the road for those following behind." Germany's Armin Schwarz, who spun off yesterday and blamed spectators for throwing ice on the road, was hit by further trouble. First, a bolt broke in the suspension of his Mitsubishi on the seventh stage and then differential problems on the next caused him to drop even further behind. Of the 186 cars which began the rally Monday, only 151 lined up for Tuesday's start.

Lehto undergoes neck operation

LONDON (R) — Finnish Grand Prix driver JJ Lehto underwent an operation on his neck Monday following his crash at Silverstone and is expected to make a full recovery. Lehto suffered a damaged upper vertebra in a 240 km per hour crash at Silverstone's Stowe corner during testing with his Benetton Formula One Team last Friday. A source close to the team said the 27-year-old Finn was not in a serious condition and was expected to make a full recovery. He can walk with no great discomfort and is expected to leave hospital by the end of the week.

Ivic walks out on Porto

LISBON (AFP) — Porto coach Tomislav Ivic quit FC Porto Tuesday, the club revealed. The 61-year-old Croatian joined the club after leaving Benfica following a string of bad results at the start of the 1992-93 season. FC Porto are currently third in the Portuguese league behind Benfica and Sporting Lisbon, who have recently sacked English coach Bobby Robson. Ivic was under contract until the end of 1994. Former Porto coach Carlos Alberto Silva of Brazil is tipped to take over.

Fencer killed in training tragedy

RODEZ, France (AFP) — A French fencer was killed during

a training accident here Monday. Gilles Malet, 20, a student from Toulouse, died when his opponent's blade pierced his protection at the armpit before snapping off.

One in 25 caught by dope tests

MONACO (R) — One in every 25 athletes taking out-of-competition dope tests last year were caught using steroids, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) said Monday. The IAAF said the first year of a major campaign against doping through random tests proved much more successful than taking samples from athletes during competition. It said its 476 surprise tests, taken in 27 countries, found four per cent of athletes taking steroids, compared with a figure of only 0.06 per cent of positive tests during competition. Athletes can obtain benefits in endurance and in muscle-building from taking steroids during training and still test negative in competition by dropping the drug well before an event. The IAAF's doping commission and medical committee, meeting in Monaco, decided to step up the tests this year as part of its war on doping. The world governing body said it would almost double the number of out-of-competition tests in 1994 and visit some 30 countries. Last year's enhanced drugs programme cost \$500,000.

Prost hints at possible return

PARIS (R) — World Champion racing driver Alain Prost gave the broadest hint yet, in a statement released Monday, that he may be seriously considering competing again this season. The Frenchman's former team McLaren have been trying to tempt Prost out of the retirement he announced while he was winning last year's Formula One title for Williams. In a statement to the French daily Le Parisien, released Tuesday, Prost commented on an opinion poll commissioned by the newspaper which showed 54 per cent of the public favoured the driver going back to McLaren. "Since rumours have been circulating about my possible return to competition, I have been wondering what people were thinking. Now, thanks to the Parisien, I know and, what's more, I'm reassured," his statement said. "I have noted with pleasure the positive reaction to me by French public opinion. However, at the moment I cannot go any further in my plans for 1994. Whatever final decision I take, for which no deadline has been fixed, I know it will not be easy." Prost took a year off from the sport in 1992 after being fired by Ferrari and returned to win his fourth world title with Williams. He retired after a year of his two-year contract.

Leeds to ban Yobs for life

LONDON (AFP) — Leeds United are to ban for life the Yobs who ruined the minute's silence for the late Sir Matt Busby before their English Premiership defeat at Blackburn last Sunday.

The club's executive board announced Tuesday that those who chanted "there's only one Don Revie" during the tribute to Sir Matt would be denied entry to all Leeds matches.

The Yorkshire club have launched a hunt for the hooligans. Videos and newspaper photographs are being scrutinised by Leeds officials in the hope of identifying those responsible.

"Much has been achieved over the last few years and the club is determined to continue its strenuous efforts to rid Leeds United of this unruly element," the club explained in a statement.

Harding's ex-husband offers evidence against her

DETROIT (R) — U.S. figure skating champion Tonya Harding's ex-husband Jeff Gillooly has offered to give Harding to investigators "on a silver platter" as part of a plea bargain deal, according to a published report Tuesday.

The Detroit Free Press, citing people familiar with the case, said Gillooly is trying to cut a deal with prosecutors in Oregon investigating the Jan. 6 attack on skater Nancy Kerrigan that put her out of competition for the U.S. title.

"Gillooly has told investigators that he could serve her up on a silver platter," one such person told the newspaper.

Gillooly's attorney Ron Daniels could not be reached for comment but a spokeswoman for Daniels told the Free Press no negotiations for a plea bargain were underway.

"At this point, there's nothing going on," she said. Gillooly, who had a stormy three-year marriage with Harding, is under investigation for the attack on Kerrigan in Detroit.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & YAMAM KURDI
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A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

Both vulnerable. East deals.
NORTH
♠ K J 6 3
♥ 10 5 3 2
♦ 9 4 3
♣ K

WEST
♠ 8 8
♥ Q 4
♦ Q 10 5
♣ Q 7 5 4 2

EAST
♠ Q 7
♥ A K 8 7
♦ 10 7
♣ J 10 9 6 3

SOUTH
♠ A 10 5 4 2
♥ J 9 6
♦ K 8 2
♣ A 5

The bidding:
East South West North
1 ♠ 1 NT 4 ♠

Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠

When you are trying to pull the wool over an opponent's eyes, the earlier the misdirection is attempted the better the chance of success.

Plays that are impossible to read only in the hand might be an open book by trick seven or eight. Here's an example of a beautiful swindle by Pakistani star Masood Salim.

East's opening bid was artificial and showed 10-15 points, while denying a five-card major. West's one no trump denoted length in the mi-

nor suits and, after the lead of the queen of diamonds, declarer was faced with having to find a way to reduce four red-suit losers to three. After a normal pause to consider the prospects, declarer came to the conclusion that the only chance was to discard one of the heart losers on dummy's fourth diamond. To accomplish that, declarer would have to find East with a doubleton diamond (10 7 was the best possibility), since West had announced length in the suit and a diamond trick would have to be surrendered before the table's long card could be utilized.

Had declarer won in hand with the king of diamonds and drawn trumps there was the chance that the defenders would be able to signal their strength. In any event, the position would be much easier for the defenders to read. Masood found an elegant solution. He allowed the queen to hold, playing the six from hand.

Not surprisingly, West continued with the five of diamonds. Declarer won in hand, cashed the king and ace of trumps, then finessed the nine of diamonds. A heart disappeared on the ace of diamonds, and another "unmakeable" contract rolled home.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Strong quake threatens Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel faces the threat of a strong earthquake, the director of the country's seismology department warned Tuesday. "There's no doubt that we are nearing this big quake," Gadi Shamir told a parliamentary committee on state finances. It was likely to measure more than six on the Richter scale causing severe damage. State comptroller Miriam Ben Porat explained in her annual report that Israel was located in a "high risk" area in which hundreds of small tremors occurred each year. "All the experts agree there is a high probability of a strong earthquake in the next 50 years," Ms. Ben Porat said. The most vulnerable area is northeast Israel, near Tiberian lake. The last major earthquake was in 1927, at the time of British mandated Palestine. Three hundred people were killed and more than 1,000 houses collapsed.

Hurd testifies in arms-for-Iraq inquiry

LONDON (AFP) — Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd testified Tuesday he was "pretty sure" he was never told that British guidelines on military sales to Iraq had been relaxed in the period preceding the Gulf war. When he took office in October 1989, he was handed a Foreign Office position paper on Iran and Iraq intended as a "crash course" on the political-military situation in the Gulf at the time, Mr. Hurd told an arms-to-Iraq inquiry. But he said the paper had not gone into detail on government guidelines on military sales to the two countries, and moreover, he had had little chance to read into the job in detail before starting to take decisions. "There is no honeymoon or handover period," said Mr. Hurd. "You are not given an opportunity to sit beside your predecessor before you have to start taking decisions."

55 killed in south Sudan measles epidemic

KHARTOUM (R) — Authorities have declared a state of emergency of Sudan's southern Equatoria region after an outbreak of measles killed 55 children, a Khartoum newspaper reported Tuesday. The government-owned Al Sudan Al Hadith said the deaths occurred in Kwoda area 40 kilometres northwest of Juba, southern Sudan's main town. About 200 people, all medical personnel, staff of voluntary organisations working in the medical field and the medical services administration, in the area have been called in to try and contain the epidemic, it said. Health authorities have rushed in emergency drugs.

Saudis halve Mecca quota for Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Saudi Arabia has halved the number of Iranians allowed to visit Islam's holiest shrines in Mecca for the annual pilgrimage, a newspaper here said Tuesday. Officials told an Iranian delegation visiting Saudi Arabia that they had reduced the quota for Iran's pilgrims to 60,000 against 120,000 last year, Salam reported. It said the delegation criticised the decision as "illogical." An official from Iran's Martyrs Foundation, which looks after the families of war victims, told the paper that the foundation had also been forced to halve the number of its pilgrims, from 3,000 to 1,500.

Iraq paper urges Turkey to end embargo

NICOSIA (AP) — An Iraqi army newspaper Tuesday urged Turkey to end its economic boycott of Iraq, saying its support for the U.S.-led coalition during the Gulf war had hurt it profoundly, according to the state-run Iraqi News Agency. "What is needed is a serious effort to lift the blockade of Iraq and restore normal economic relations, which is an indispensable step towards salvaging Turkey from its unjustifiable dilemma," according to the report monitored in Nicosia. "The Turkish president, premier and political party leaders realise now the size of the economic and political dilemma that has started to face Turkey," said the news agency, quoting the Defence Ministry daily Al Qadisiyah. Ankara's support for the aggression against Iraq harmed Turkey economically, politically and historically, the newspapers said.

Turkish woman cuts off lover's penis

ISTANBUL (AFP) — A Turkish woman sliced off the penis of her lover after he announced he was leaving her in a copycat version of the Lorena Bobbitt case in the United States, the daily Hurriyet reported Tuesday. A hospital in Ankara surgically reattached the penis of victim Abdullah Kemal Konak, a garage security guard. The woman, Zeynep Altin, whose age and job were not revealed, was reportedly on the run. She was said to have bound Mr. Konak by his hands and feet when he was too drunk to resist. The operation on Mr. Konak lasted four hours, but it will be a week before surgeons know whether he will recover all his sexual capabilities, hospital officials said.

Protestant leader goes missing in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian Armenian leader of A Protestant sect in the Middle East has been missing since last week, his Assembly of God church said Tuesday. An official of the church told AFP that Hike Hosenian had disappeared last Wednesday on the way to Mehrabad airport in Tehran to receive a guest arriving from the central city of Esfahan. A newspaper said police were investigating the case. A police official, speaking to the daily Salam, denied Mr. Hosenian had been arrested. The Assembly of God has members in several countries of the Middle East, around 500 of them in Iran, including Armenians, Assyrians and Farsi-speakers, according to Protestant church sources.

U.S. Jews confer with Moroccan leaders

RABAT (R) — A delegation from B'nai B'rith has met Moroccan Prime Minister Mohammed Karim Lamrani and government leaders in Rabat, the official news agency MAP said Tuesday. Ten members of the American Jewish group, led by its President Kent Schiner, discussed "possibilities for economic cooperation and the conditions in which B'nai B'rith could contribute to the development of foreign investment in Morocco," the agency said. It is the second visit to Morocco.

Insecurity scares Sahara tourists away

ALGIERS (R) — Insecurity in Algeria's Saharan region has scared off visitors, ruining tourism in the desert resort of Tamanrasset, the official agency APS said Tuesday. It said Sahara tourism was "in a catastrophic situation" because of "the practically total absence of foreign tourists" during the peak winter season. It blamed the slump on "insecurity generated by acts of banditry in the last two years, directly related to illegal African emigration to Tamanrasset," a reference to the influx of people fleeing hardship and political problems in neighbouring states. It added that "after painful events like the taking of French hostages and the assassination of foreigners," the number of tourists fell to zero by December.

Arafat's bodyguards to be trained in U.S.

TUNIS (AP) — Yasser Arafat is sending a group of his most trusted men to the United States for specialised training to enable them to become his bodyguards when he moves to the occupied territories, sources said Tuesday. Sources close to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said the group will involve several dozen men, mostly former PLO guerrillas. They are to travel to the United States next month for the U.S.-government-sponsored course, said the sources. The men will receive their training in undisclosed place under an agreement reached between the PLO and the U.S. administration after Secretary of State Warren Christopher visited the PLO headquarters in Tunis in December, the sources said. Mr. Arafat's office and the U.S. embassy in Tunis would neither confirm nor deny the report.

Baghdad exchanges suspend operations

AMMAN (AP) — Moneychangers have frozen all dealings in Baghdad following a call for a crackdown on blackmarket dealings to check the beleaguered dinar's plunge, residents and Amman dealers said Tuesday. "Not a single moneychanger is visible in Baghdad markets," said a resident reached by telephone from Amman. "Everyone is scared that a police roundup of moneychangers is coming."

The dinar, weakened by an economy staggering under a nearly 40-month international trade embargo plunged to 196 to the U.S. dollar on the black market Saturday and rose to around 175 dinars to the dollar before trading was suspended Sunday.

Under the official rate, the dinar is worth \$3.22 but the black market is widely tolerated, apart from an occasional crackdown.

The resident, who declined to be identified said exchanges panicked after a hard-hitting editorial appeared Saturday in Babel, a free-wheeling daily run by President Saddam Hussein's son, Uday.

Babel blamed the Iraqi dinar's dive on speculation by moneychangers whom it described as a "threat to national security."

Al Thawra, the ruling Baath Party's mouthpiece, called on security forces to intervene and impose "a responsible attitude... to curtail their (moneychangers) oppression... which is tantamount to enemy actions."

In December, the Iraqi government relaxed foreign exchange regulations and allowed Iraqis to operate bank accounts in non-Iraqi currency.

The central bank also licensed 25 exchange houses, but the moves appeared to have done little to improve the situation.

"Iraqi moneychangers are afraid that the authorities will now launch proceedings against them," said Sufian Alami of the Alami Exchange House in Amman. "Trading had come to a total stop since Sunday."

The dinar has steadily lost value since the United Nations imposed sweeping international sanctions against Iraq following the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

But the plunge this month was unprecedented and followed the United Nations' decision to maintain for another six months sanctions still in place pending Iraq's compliance with all ceasefire resolutions.

The sanctions have deprived Baghdad of its oil exports, its main foreign exchange earner.

The United Nations has offered Iraq a one-time sale of oil worth \$1.6 billion to pay for urgent humanitarian needs and U.N. costs, but Baghdad has rejected the conditions, saying they infringe on its sovereignty.

Food and medical supplies are exempt from the sanctions. But Iraq has exhausted its foreign currency reserves and now says it has no more cash to pay for them.

Baghdad has been rallying for lifting the embargo.

Palestinian alliance names leadership

By Jamal Halaby

AMMAN — An alliance of hardline Palestinian factions has named a leadership council to direct their quest to wreck the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy deal, activists said Tuesday.

The 20-member council of the Alliance of Palestinian Forces was formed during a Jan. 19 meeting in the Syrian capital, Damascus, they said.

The council members include Ahmad Jibril of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), Nayef Hawatmeh of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and Mohammad Musa of Fatah-Uppering. Each faction named its secretary-general and a deputy to the council, except the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), whose leader George Habash preferred to stay away because of cardiac ailments, the activists said.

Ibrahim Ghosheh, a council member and Amman-based spokesman for Hamas, said the group will meet in Damascus again by mid-February to elect a president.

Delegates to that meeting will endorse a statute for the alliance, he said, adding that "the next phase will witness serious endeavours to confront the so-called Israel-PLO peace accord and escalate the Palestinian uprising against the Zionist enemy."

The Damascus-based alliance, formed in December, joins 10 factions with ideologies as disparate as Marxism and Islamic fundamentalism. The Marxists oppose PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's agreement for limited self-rule in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. They say the agreement falls short of fulfilling Palestinian aspirations for an independent state.

Hamas and other Islamic fundamentalist groups in the alliance say they want nothing less than Israel's destruction. The council members are: Abu Al Mustafa and Abu Ahmad Fouad of the PFLP; Nayef Hawatmeh, and Ramzi Rahab of the DFLP; Ibrahim Ghosheh and Mohammad Nazzari of Hamas; Ahmad Jibril and Talaq Naji of the PFLP-GC; Mohammad Musa and Abu Fakher of Fatah-Uppering; Fathi Shiqqi and Isam Amer of Islamic Jihad-Palestine; Issam Al-Qadi and Sami Qandeel of Hizbollah-Palestine; Khaled Abdul Majid and Haitham Abdul Kader of the Popular Struggle Front.

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NATIONAL DIALOGUE: Ali Kafi, head of the five-man High State Council of Algeria, arrives at the Palace of Nations, where an Algerian national conference aimed at ending two years of militant violence opened Tuesday (see story inside)

Israel seeks Turkish water

ANKARA (R) — Israeli President Ezer Weizman said Tuesday his country was seeking to buy water from Turkey and to cooperate in military matters, trade and tourism.

"Israel is a potential buyer of water," Mr. Weizman told a news conference in Ankara a day after talks with Turkish President Suleyman Demirel. "We lack water. You have water in abundance."

"The president and I discussed the possibility of purchasing water," he said.

Mr. Weizman, on the first state visit by an Israeli president to Turkey, said his discussions had focused on Turkish rivers which flow to the Mediterranean. "This water is now wasted," he said.

Foreign Ministry sources said construction had begun on a filling station to hold 180 million cubic metres of water from the Manavgat River, east of the southern resort of Antalya.

The water, to be transported by sea from an offshore terminal, would be up for tender once the station is completed next year. Israel had expressed keen interest, the sources said. Water is a frequent source of

friction in the thirsty Middle East. Turkey is increasing control of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which rise in its territory, through its huge dam and irrigation scheme, the southeastern Anatolian project (GAP).

Mr. Weizman, due to visit the GAP region on Wednesday, said Syria and Iraq, alarmed by Turkey's grip on regional water supplies, had no need to worry about the Manavgat project.

"If Syria is worried, if Iraq is worried, there is no need," Mr. Weizman said. "No one is intending to deprive any of the neighbouring countries of water."

Mr. Demirel had agreed to initiate technical talks on a free trade accord and to cooperate in the fields of tourism, technology, security and defence.

"All military establishments over the world are trying to convert military know-how... to civilian fields," he said. "There are also great possibilities for spin-offs," Mr. Weizman added. "The military establishment in both our countries is very big. I hope we can find a way to cooperate, exchange knowledge, and find

mutual benefit through joint ventures."

He is accompanied by representatives of Israel's military, aviation and hi-tech industries as well as 22 businessmen and Israeli Central Bank Governor Jakob Frankel.

Asked if Israel and Turkey planned to cooperate against terrorism, Mr. Weizman said it was "very difficult to ask a country to cooperate physically" in another's anti-terror fight, but added that "cooperation in know-how, in training and exchanging information" was possible.

The Turkish government has been fighting for the past 10 years against separatist Kurdish Labour Party guerrillas in the southeast. The struggle has cost more than 10,500 lives.

Mr. Weizman said Turkey held a key position in a volatile region and could be a factor for stability.

"Turkey talks to everybody," Mr. Weizman said. "Turkey is very much oriented on development of a future new Middle East, for which a lot depends on peaceful relations with us, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan."

Rare praise for Assad, page 2

Mubarak: Militants doomed to fail

CAIRO (R) — President Hosni Mubarak told his police force Tuesday that the Muslim militants movement was doomed to fail but the government would respect the law and human rights in its campaign against political violence.

In a speech on police day, after awarding posthumous medals to policemen killed by Muslim fundamentalists, Mr. Mubarak again accused unnamed foreign powers of instigating the wave of violence which began almost two years ago.

At least 279 people have been killed and 669 injured in the violence, most of them either policemen or members of underground Islamic groups which want to overthrow the government and set up a strict Islamic state.

"The threads of the danger extend to a conspiracy by well-known foreign forces which do not want Egypt to be stable and to progress," Mr. Mubarak said.

"The aim of these groups is to impoverish Egypt and obstruct its progress in the interest of foreign powers which want Egypt 'shattered' by problems of unemployment and poverty," he added.

"But terrorism has no future in this tolerant land. It is doomed to failure and defeat. It will remain isolated and under siege until its roots are torn up," he said.

Egypt said countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, Sudan and Yemen have helped the militants, either directly or by allowing them to train on their territory.

Political analysts say that foreign influences have played a part in the wave of violence but that the fundamentalist movement is largely a response to local conditions.

But Mr. Mubarak described the militant groups as "a small minority... outside the national mainstream, at odds with the spirit of the people and detrimental to its interests."

"They will not be able to subvert the will of society and dictate to this country a course which leads only to ignorance, tyranny, oppression and poverty," he added.

The president said the state could have used the wave of violence as the justification for draconian and exceptional measures but it preferred to work within the law.

"The arm of the state is strong and well able to uproot the elements of terrorism in the quickest possible time. But we do not want to violate the sovereignty of the law."

"Police conduct will remain civilised, refraining from the methods of revenge and no one shall be punished for the crimes of another," he said.

Egypt has been under emergency law since the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981 and human rights groups say the police have tortured detainees and violated human rights in the fight against political violence.

But the independent Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights said on Sunday that the militant groups bore most of the responsibility for recent deaths in the violence.

Police have largely given up the practice of "physically eliminating" militants, it said.

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COLUMN

U.K. colonel marries Bosnia aid worker

LONDON (AFP) — Colonel Bob Stewart, former commander of Britain's U.N. troops in Bosnia-Herzegovina, has married the Swiss aid worker he met two years ago during his frontline service, the press reported Tuesday. He married 28-year-old Red Cross worker Claire Podbielski in a private ceremony at a register office in Weybridge, Surrey, Friday.

There were two witnesses, no other guests, papers said. Last year, Col. Stewart, 44, returned from the former Yugoslavia and announced he was separating from Lizzie, his wife of 20 years. Their divorce became final in November.

Col. Stewart, who became chief of police for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) next month in Bosnia, said: "We wanted to attract as little attention as possible, otherwise it would have been hell." Col. Stewart became widely known here as the first British commander to get U.N. humanitarian aid to central Bosnia as well as for his emotional outburst "against the atrocities being committed by local forces."

Jackson, son deny drug allegations

CHICAGO (R) — Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson and his son Jonathan have denied reports that the younger Jackson may have been involved in a drug ring. The San Francisco Examiner reported Sunday that Jonathan Jackson had been named as a suspect in an alleged international heroin smuggling ring. Reverend Jackson told a news conference the allegations were baseless and said his son and all his other children had always "played by the rules." He said the family intended to go to the offensive "against the allegations. The Examiner, quoting documents filed in San Francisco Federal Court, said federal agents believed the younger Jackson was "a possible narcotics courier" for an Oakland-based network which involved high-ranking Nigerian officials smuggling heroin from South East Asia through Africa and Europe to the United States. The documents, according to the newspaper, describe wiretapped phone calls between the younger Jackson and a Nigerian citizen indicated as the network's alleged ringleader. In the conversations, Jackson is said to use language including the words "oil" and "script" which investigators said could have been code words for international drug deal. The younger Jackson, a Chicago stockbroker, told the newspaper conference that "it is not illegal in America for a black man to discuss oil with an African." He said the man he had been talking to was a legitimate businessman with investments in oil, television and movie production.

Cartland inspired U.K.'s 'back to basics' policies

LONDON (AFP) — Dame Barbara Cartland, the novelist known for her vast output of romantic fiction, has claimed to be inspiration for Prime Minister John Major's troubled plans for a return to traditional values. The 92-year-old writer claimed that she inspired Major's "back to basics" campaign during a lunch with the prime minister and his wife Norma, according to a report that first surfaced in the Sunday Telegraph. Mr. Major's office at 10 Downing Street said the pink-clad novelist had planted the seed of Mr. Major's campaign, which focused on his government following a series of scandals involving MPs. Asked by Mr. Major what was the source of her success, Ms. Cartland said she replied "I give my readers what they want — good moral stories," the Guardian newspaper reported. But the novelist conceded in a television interview that it was Mr. Major who took her idea of a return to traditional morality and turned it into the "back to basics" phrase that briefly revived Mr. Major's standing after the Conservative Party conference last year. However, the campaign backedfire in the past month as the Conservative have been swamped by sex and money scandals and accusations of hypocrisy.

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